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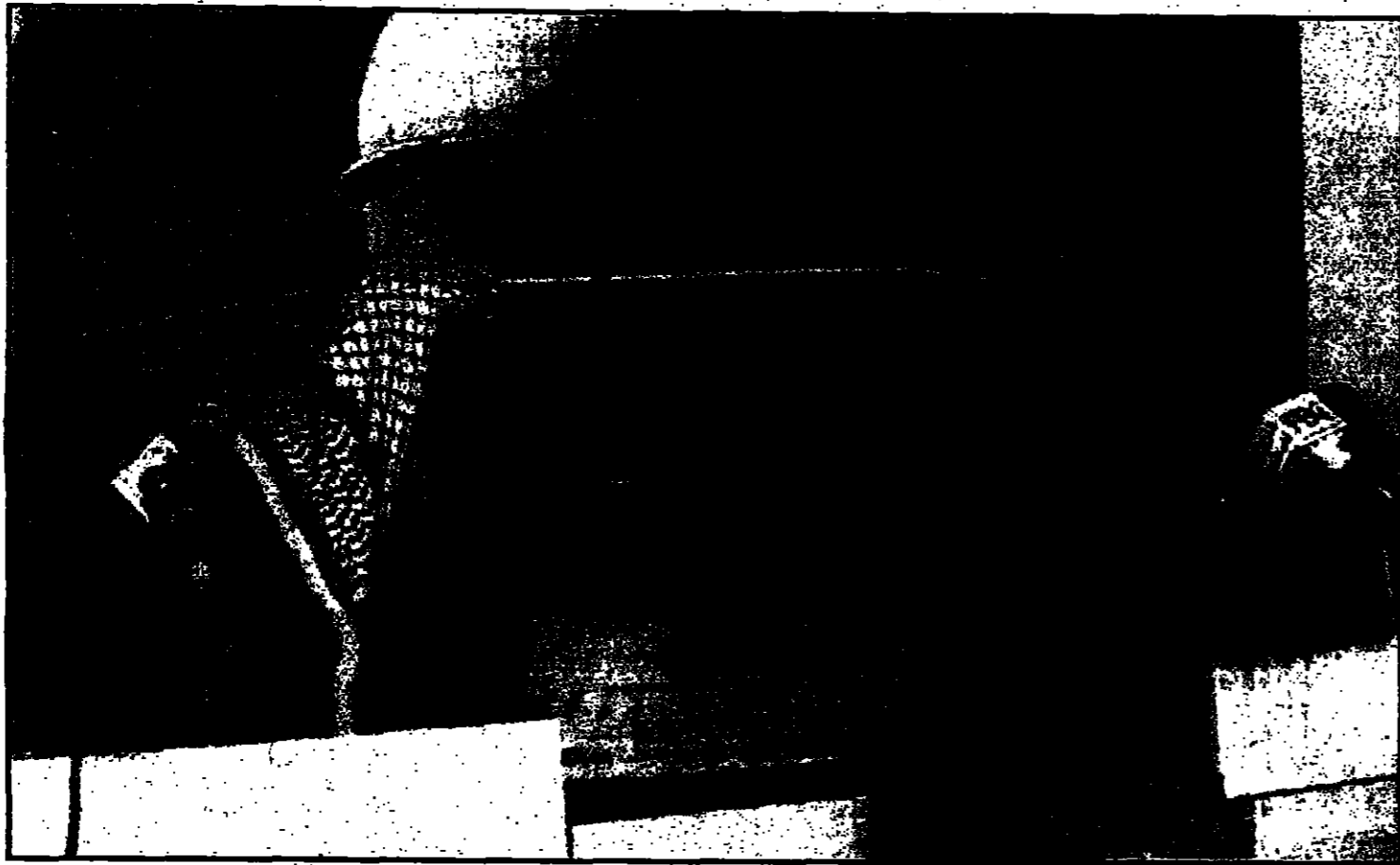
THE JERUSALEM POST

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PA Chairman Yasser Arafat and Housing Minister Binjamin Ben-Eliezer introduce each other at the outset of yesterday's press conference in Gaza. Story, Page 2.

4 GSS officers guilty of misusing funds resign

Money came from colleagues and informer fund

THE General Security Service was rocked yesterday when four senior officers, including the head of the service's Samaria district, resigned after an internal investigation found they had misused funds meant to finance operations.

ON LEVY The complaint reached Gillon, who immediately launched an inquiry. The inquiry revealed that the Samaria district head had been regularly borrowing money from subordinates for years.

terfere with the internal inquiry, collaborating on a version of events in an attempt to cover up the incident. Other employees knew about the improper withdrawals but never reported them.

Savir, Rabinovich: Syrian agreement possible in '96

PROGRESS in the negotiations with Syria was made on all the subjects that were discussed, Foreign Ministry Director-General Uri Savir said after the latest round of talks concluded Wednesday night.

Jerusalem Post Staff retary of State Warren Christopher, then more talks - is a good way to make progress, as the talks are still in the conceptual stage, Savir said.

visited Jerusalem and Damascus, and while "no one should expect everything will be solved in one visit," next week's round of regional diplomacy by Christopher "shows that the negotiations are very much alive, even if it goes at a slow pace."

Both he and Ambassador to the US Itamar Rabinovich said that it is possible to reach a peace agreement this year. "In all areas, after two rounds of talks, we have moved up at least one level on the way to moving the process forward," Savir said.

The next stage - the actual negotiations - will be done by separate small working groups that will draw up a peace treaty, he added. Syria said yesterday that no progress had been made during the latest round of peace talks.

Regarding media pessimism, Savir quoted Peres: "What is happening is not reflected [in the press], and what is reflected is not what's happening." "I am not sorry about that," he added, noting that the further the negotiations progress, so will the gap between what is happening in the talks and what is reported by the media.

According to a senior Israeli source, this round of talks at the Wye Plantation in Maryland focused mainly on security arrangements. He said that for the first time ideas were raised whose goal is "to provide a joint basis for further progress."

But Walid Mualem, the top Syrian peace negotiator with Israel, told the official Syrian News Agency SANA that the talks allowed the two parties to tackle the issue of security arrangements.

"A lot of work remains before us," he said, "but with the same spirit that characterized the first two rounds, and with the same discretion and seriousness, it is possible to reach a peace agreement this year."

PM: Referendum even if we win elections

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres has committed himself to holding a referendum over a withdrawal from the Golan if an accord with Syria is reached after early elections.

DOUGLAS DAVIS in London and SARAH HONIG government continue until its term ends in late October, but "there are some considerations, not connected with the peace process," which incline him to early elections.

The final decision about the Golan, he said, should "in any case be subjected to a referendum, regardless of when elections take place. There are many people who would like to see Peres as prime minister, but who have a problem on the issue of the Golan. Why should we stop these people from voting for Peres? This can be done if we let them have a separate say on the Golan in a referendum."

Sneh to MDA board of directors: Suspend head of blood services

HEALTH Minister Ephraim Sneh has called on Mageda David Adom's board of directors to suspend its director of blood services, Dr. Amnon Ben-David, until the Navon Committee investigating the Ethiopian immigrant blood donation affair reaches its conclusions.

JUDY SIEGEL Luria, who took office last year after previously running MDA from 1986-1988, has claimed he was unaware of the policy relating to Ethiopian immigrant blood donations. The MDA director-general will make his position known on Sunday, MDA spokesman Dan Arnon said.

ago by his predecessor, Dr. Shlomit Bar-Shani, but that he re-approved it when he took up his post four years ago. His cellular phone has been accepting only recorded messages due to harassment and threats.

North American Newsstand Prices for J.P. Friday Edition N.Y. N.J. \$3.00 Canada: CDN \$5.00 +TAX Elsewhere: \$4.00

Table with columns: SHABBAT BEGINS, ENDS, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, BeerSheva, Eilat

George Ballnt will be sitting shiva for his late wife IRENE my at the Hilton Hotel, Tel Aviv, Room 1722, on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, February 4-6, from 3:30 p.m. till the Minha-Ma'ariv services.

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Weather, World, and other sidebar information including a map of Jerusalem and a small portrait of a man.

Israel to pay same low prices as Pentagon for US-made weapons

A NEW provision in the foreign aid bill that was passed last week by the US Congress will prevent Israel from being legally overcharged by American defense contractors.

The provision, known as "competitive pricing," ensures that all recipients of foreign aid, who use American funds to purchase weaponry in US, will be charged the same rate that defense contractors charge the Pentagon.

The entire estimated \$12 billion in US foreign aid was part of the continuing resolution that both houses of Congress passed last week, enabling the US government to remain open until the end of March. Israel receives \$3 billion in annual military and economic aid, and Egypt receives another \$2.1 billion.

DAVID MAKOVSKY

Sources familiar with American military aid to Israel insist that Israel often paid an average of 2 percent to 5 percent more for weapon systems, such as the F-16, than the Pentagon. Some sources believe the savings will amount to roughly \$50 million a year.

The competitive pricing provision has long been sought by pro-Israel activists in Washington, but was only agreed to this year after American defense contractors were mollified.

"I think people understood that American tax dollars should not go to higher profit margins," one pro-Israel activist said. "We are not talking about less money being spent in the US, but rather more projects for the same level of funding."

About \$1.325 billion of US military aid to Israel is spent in the US, with the remaining \$475 million spent here.

The new provision will apply to new contracts, but the old rules will apply to existing ones. Furthermore, if Israel wants special adjustments made on its weapon systems, above and beyond what is provided to the Pentagon, it would obviously pay more.

The second new provision in last week's bill enables the Clinton administration to approve the prepositioning of US military equipment in Israel without prior congressional approval. Sources say that until now, this exemption was only given to NATO allies.

The US is believed to be stockpiling \$300 million worth of military equipment in Israel.



Women jump out of a jeep as part of their training to serve in Border Police tactical units. The Border Police earlier this week announced the plan to train women for its elite units, including the anti-terror unit. (Reuters)

PA opposition groups: We'll deal with new situation

JON IMMANUEL

WITH Palestinian Authority council elections behind them, Islamic and PLO opposition groups are gearing up for the Palestinian National Council meeting, municipal elections and final settlement talks.

Representatives of the factions said yesterday that they do not consider themselves a spent political force.

"We understand we are facing a new era," said Dr. Mohammed Jaddalah, a leading spokesman of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. "Something fundamental has changed. We do not accept this but we deal with it."

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, media adviser for P.A. Chairman Yasser Arafat, said "no date" has been fixed for the PNC meeting. But since the council is to be convened shortly after Ramadan at the end of February, and Oslo 2 requires a change in the 1968 National Charter two months after that, the end of April is the target date.

He denied a report in the Ramallah daily *Hayat al-Jadida* that April 12 had been set for the crucial meeting.

Abu Rudeineh said the PLO executive council is "to meet abroad" shortly to discuss how to frame the call for a change in the charter - whether to delete its anti-Israel sections or replace the charter with a new one.

Housing Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer met with Arafat in Gaza yesterday and congratulated him, saying, "If you asked me two years ago whether there would be elections, I would have laughed." Arafat assured him the charter would be changed.

Last week in Damascus, George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

drew up a list of 50 leaders it said should have the right to return to the Palestinian autonomous areas.

Habash himself, however, will remain abroad to represent Palestinians there, said Riyad Malki, a PFLP spokesman in Ramallah.

The DFPLP has sent a list of 100 leaders, including 30 members of the PNC, to the PA, said Jaddalah.

Jaddalah said the PNC, which includes all the PLO factions, should have a say in the final-status talks. This leaves open the possibility of trading PNC and opposition influence over the final settlement in exchange for its agreeing to change the charter now, which is a precondition for launching the final-status talks.

Jaddalah said that "might be possible," but it would have to include an Israeli commitment now that "it recognizes the right of self-determination."

Hamas is not a member of the PLO or PNC and its efforts are directed at municipal elections.

At a news conference in El Bireh yesterday, Hamas leaders said last month's elections were fraudulent, and claimed far fewer voters turned out than was officially stated.

Hamas, the PFLP and the DFPLP are all demanding to help frame the municipal election law, to give them a better chance of winning.

Municipal elections are expected in May or June.

Meanwhile, a repeat of voting in two Jabalya polling stations after reported election fraud gave a PA council seat to Imad Falouji, the former Hamas leader, who ran on a Fatah ticket "as an Islamist and the real voice of the opposition."

Netanyahu: Polls worrying Peres

SARAH HONG

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres "wants to reschedule the elections because he is worried by the narrowing gap in the polls," Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday.

Peres has been leading by an average of 20 percent ever since Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. Prior to that Netanyahu had a narrow lead over Rabin.

"Peres is worried, and I can see why," Netanyahu said. "No matter when elections are held, be it in June or October, the Likud will win - and he knows it. Peres had initially promised not to exploit the assassination."

but it now appears that he is in a rush precisely in order to effect a political hijacking and maximize the boost Labor got after the assassination. In any event, the Likud will discuss its stand on the date of elections."

The Likud's executive bureau, however, did not take up the issue in its session last night, which Netanyahu did not attend. The meeting was largely devoted to the Likud's dilemma over updating its platform without abandoning its ideology.

Bureau chairman MK Uzi

Landau argued that "as things stand now, there is no question of us dealing with [PLO Chairman Yasser] Arafat because he simply has not recognized Israel's right to exist. He has been toying with us for two-and-a-half years. His rhetoric is one of incitement, and he has failed to amend the Palestine Covenant or to hand over terrorists. The Oslo accords are being violated by the PLO, and a Likud government will not stand for it."

But other notes were also struck at the meeting, with MK Ovedia Eli asserting that "agreements signed by one government must be honored by the governments which follow it. We will not ignore the Oslo agreement."

"The question is not whether to talk to Arafat, but under what conditions to talk, about what to talk, and how to handle the negotiations. The Likud will do so far better than Labor, and with less irresponsibility as far as Israel's vital interests are involved."

Hebron settlers: IDF should stay until covenant amended

HERB KENON

THE Hebron settlement committee called on the government yesterday to put off IDF redeployment in the city, scheduled for the end of March, until after the Palestinian Covenant is amended.

David Wilder, a spokesman for the committee, said it is absurd that Hebron - the last of the seven major Palestinian cities to be handed over to the Palestinian Authority - be turned over before the Palestinian National Council convenes and amends the covenant.

Yasser Arafat said this week that the PNC will convene on April 12, while redeployment in Hebron is scheduled for the end of March. "This makes no sense," Wilder said. "By then they will have everything, including Hebron, and Arafat will say he couldn't get a democratic majority to change the covenant."

Wilder said that he obviously would like to see the Hebron redeployment canceled altogether, "but even using the government's philosophy it should not move out of Hebron until after the covenant is changed."

In addition, Wilder said, Prime Minister Shimon Peres has said that the peace process would come to a halt unless the covenant is amended. In an appearance before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee in November, Peres said that if the covenant is not changed by March, "the train will be halted."

ON SUNDAY - OUTLOOK DAY IN THE JERUSALEM POST

DON'T MISS: American Outlook comments by Alan Dershowitz, Martin Peretz, Evans and Novak and other leading American columnists; and favorite comics: Peanuts, B.C., Feiffer, Calvin, and Hobbes.

DON'T MISS IT!

Jordan, Palestinians agree on trade ties

Jordan and the Palestinian Authority agreed yesterday to consolidate trade ties and revitalize economic accords. Jordan's state-run Petra news agency said the agreement was reached during a meeting between Prime Minister Zeid Bin Shaker and Mohammed Nashashibi, the

Palestinian finance minister. Last January, Jordan and the PA signed a broad agreement that governed all aspects of the historic ties between the Hashemite kingdom and the West Bank.

According to official figures, the volume of trade between Jordan and the PA between May and December last year totaled \$52 million. Most of that was accounted for by Jordanian imports from the West Bank. AP

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In last night's Paysis Hazak drawing, the holder of ticket number 635482 won NIS 1,000,000.

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Tickets numbered 190735, 42453, 270264, 899568, 401735, 725118, 413435 and 028239 won NIS 5,000. Those tickets ending in 91285, 77068, 62441, 85808, 99757, 83142, 99502, 51616, 74307, 21042, 89445, 27969, 05061, 10140, 31994, 75297, 74065, 61805 and 14724 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 442, 837, 711, 357, and 567 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 23, 73, 46, 94 and 28 won NIS 24. Tickets ending in 8 and 3 won NIS 8.

In yesterday's Mifal Hapaysis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the 10 of spades, queen of hearts, ace of diamonds and ace of clubs.

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Firemen voice support for resigning chief

LIAT COLLINS

REPRESENTATIVES of the Firefighters Association were scheduled to meet with Interior Minister Haim Ramon last night following the resignation of national fire chief superintendent Elram Ma'aravi.

Ma'aravi resigned his position to protest the government's neglect of the fire and rescue service, saying he is not prepared to accept the responsibility in the event of a disaster unless the service were provided the means to operate.

The firefighters, who have been on sanctions since the beginning of the week, have warned that the fire and rescue service is on the verge of collapse. They are seeking more manpower, training and equipment, particularly for coping with hazardous materials.

Both the State Comptroller and the Knesset Interior Committee have reported that the firefighters lack the means of coping with incidents involving hazardous materials. "The public should be very concerned," Ma'aravi told reporters. "The service today lacks more than 1,000 firefighters for existing positions, and at least 30 more stations need to be established. There are some towns without a single fire station. Even in the bigger towns, stations lack basic equipment including ladders for heights."

Ma'aravi noted that many substations have just one firefighter a shift. "These are the substations furthest removed from the backup of larger stations, and the absolute minimum should be three people working a shift. I fear the massive disaster which will hit us one fine day. It's just a matter of time."

The firefighters are demanding some NIS 42 million over the next three years as part of a recovery plan.

Ramon apparently favors transferring the service to the Internal Security Ministry.



Ronni Mann, 50, suspected of being a key figure in the smuggling of tons of marijuana and cocaine from Colombia to Europe, is brought into Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court for a remand hearing yesterday. His remand was extended until February 15. (Hazoni Grizitzky/Israel Sun)

Nimrodi's plea hearing postponed again

RAINE MARCUS

THE lawyers of Ma'ariv publisher Ofer Nimrodi, indicted on 14 counts of wiretapping and paying hush money to private investigators Rafi Friedan and Ya'acov Tsur, again asked Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court for a delay of his plea hearing yesterday.

Nimrodi's co-defendant and the daily's security officer, David Ronen, also appeared yesterday, and his plea hearing was also postponed by Judge George Kara until February 18.

The hearing had already been postponed once on the grounds that the defense has not received all prosecution evidence.

Lawyers Dan Avi Yitzhak and Yehuda Weinstein argued that the indictment against Nimrodi is unclear.

Meanwhile, they are waiting for a decision by Judge David Rosen regarding prosecution evidence that the defense still has not received, including lists of subjects that the district attorney considers irrelevant.

In a related case on Wednesday, Judge Gideon Neutal ordered district attorney representative Rafi Levy to hand over lists of material he considered irrelevant to Friedan, indicted on more than 40 counts of illegal wiretapping, many of them allegedly commissioned by Nimrodi.

Histadrut bids for Ouman

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE Histadrut yesterday made a bid to purchase the Ouman textile plant in Ofakim and sell it to private entrepreneurs, in order to save the plant, which had been closed down by its owners, Polgat, some six weeks ago.

Ouman's workers, who had broken into the plant and resumed its operation on Wednesday with the Histadrut's help, continued producing sweaters enthusiastically yesterday, at the pace of 800 to 1,000 knitted units a day.

Polgat lodged a complaint with the police about the workers breaking into the plant, claiming that taking over the premises and private equipment and raw materials which belong to Polgat was criminal. But by yesterday no policeman had come or attempted to stop the work in Ouman. Beersheva District Court yesterday also ordered the workers to stop producing sweaters until negotiations with management are completed.

Polgat had also asked the Electric Corporation to cut off the power to Ouman, to prevent the machinery from being operated. But Histadrut Chairman MK Amir Peretz anticipated the move and asked the Electric Corporation union not to cooperate with Polgat.

The Electric Corporation workers, who had joined the effort to save Ouman by ordering several thousands of sweaters last month, complied with Peretz's request and kept the power flowing to the plant.

Peretz yesterday offered Polgat to purchase Ouman, at whatever price an agreed arbitrator would set for the plant. In his bid, which was sent to Polgat, the Clal Concern and Ofakim municipality, Peretz demanded that Polgat transfer the difference between the Histadrut's demands for the workers' severance fees and Polgat's offer, to the workers, as part of the sum needed to purchase Ouman's shares "and we will compensate the workers accordingly."

Ouman's purchase is estimated to cost the Histadrut millions of shekels, which it proposes to cover from special funds, until it finds private entrepreneurs to buy Ouman from the Histadrut.

Polgat denied that it had received any such proposal yesterday. Ouman's operation is being supervised by a new management team, including workers' union head Yitzhak Gozlan, and with the guidance of Dr. Lev Greenberg, a sociological-organizational specialist.

Ouman has orders for more than 200,000 units, obtained last month after Polgat had promised to re-open the plant if orders for 150,000 pullovers come in. But Polgat reneged on its commitment and refused to re-open the plant's doors.

The orders, which were received by the Histadrut's special "Operation: Sweater" team from the IDF and corporations here and abroad, are enough for at least six months of work. The Histadrut said it would finance all the raw materials required after the existing stock runs out.

The bureau of the economic organizations - consisting of 14 large employers - yesterday criticized the Histadrut's aiding the workers to take over Ouman by force, and doubted the Histadrut's ability to manage the plant.

Acting Bureau Chairman Avi Barak said that "in view of the Histadrut's past mistakes and shortcomings in managing its own companies, how will it now run Ouman? What grounds will Peretz have when he comes out against closing losing plants and firing workers, when the Histadrut itself has fired hundreds of workers?"

Taxman sentenced for taking bribes

YEHUDA KANIAS, former director of the Tel Aviv area income tax office, was sentenced yesterday to six months of community service, 18 months' probation and fined NIS 10,000 after being convicted on bribery and breach of trust charges.

Kanias, 48, was convicted of accepting a tremendous discount on goods he purchased from Negev Ceramics; of not paying Value Added Tax on their full worth; and of not being charged a delivery fee. He was quoted as telling the firm's general manager, Amiel Ronel: "Negev Ceramics now has defender in the tax office."

He was also convicted of receiving a huge discount on the purchase of a car from Eldan, on the recommendation of Ami Ungar, one of the owners of Telcar.

Kanias also admitted that his wife was employed by two companies involved in disputes with the tax authorities at a time when he was dealing with their cases.

In passing sentence, Tel Aviv District Court Judge Natan Amit noted that Kanias had lost his job, and that he was convinced that despite his failings, Kanias is basically a good man who has learned his lesson in the hardest way possible. He said that putting him in jail would be overly vengeful. (Itim)

High Court orders police to explain treatment of religious investigator

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice yesterday gave the police 21 days to explain why a religious man, who has refused to carry out certain tasks on Shabbat, should not be allowed to continue to work as a police investigator.

Meir Zorani has refused to do such things on Shabbat as issuing verifications for insurance claims on stolen objects, since they violate the prohibition against doing work not necessary for saving lives on Shabbat.

The police, therefore, wanted to either fire him or demote him to ordinary policeman, though government attorney Nurit Halstein admitted to the court that in other respects, the police are pleased with his work.

Halstein argued that one of the tasks of any police investigator is to serve occasionally as duty officer on Shabbat.

The police cannot make exceptions for religious employees, she said, because this would be unfair to the non-

religious employees, who would then have to do extra Shabbat shifts.

However, Justices Shlomo Levine, Dalia Dorner, and Gavriel Bach said they could not understand why no arrangement could be found to accommodate Zorani's needs, given that the right to practice one's religion is constitutionally protected.

"[Your approach] means that no religious Jew can be a police investigator," Dorner noted. "This is very extreme... A government body ought to find some kind of realistic solution."

One option, she suggested, might be to have him do some other type of work on Shabbat.

After attorney Naftali Werzberger clarified that Zorani is willing to do most of the necessary work on Shabbat, Bach suggested that it would be relatively simple to send the rest of the paperwork, such as the insurance forms, to the victim in the mail, after Shabbat.

Amuka grave subject of disputes

THE grave of Rabbi Yonatan Ben Uziel at Amuka in the Galilee is the subject of two disputes; one between two regional councils, and one between two government ministers.

There is a tradition that praying at the site will help the unmarried find a mate within a year, and some 250,000 people visit the grave annually. Over the past several months, the Merom Hagalil Regional Council, which presumed the grave was in its jurisdiction - because the adjacent Moshav Amuka is in its jurisdiction - invested tens of thousands of shekels to improve access to the grave.

Recently, however, it learned that the grave is actually in the area controlled by the Upper Galilee Regional Council, which in turn had formally relinquished control of the area to the Mevo'ot Hermon Regional Council.

Now the Mevo'ot Hermon and Merom Hagalil councils are each demanding that their control of the site be recognized.

Meanwhile, Tourism Minister Uzi Baram and Religious Affairs Minister Shimron Shetreet are sparring over which ministry will be in charge of the site's rededication ceremony.

Both ministries contributed to the refurbishing of the site, but neither minister wants to hold a joint rededication ceremony. (Itim)

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Clear alternatives

ONE of the Labor Party's most effective battle cries, certain to be repeated ad infinitum in the coming pre-election months, is that the opposition has no alternative to the Oslo course.

If nothing else, this claim must be hailed as a masterpiece of brazenness. It comes from politicians who, in three-and-a-half years of governing, most of which have been devoted to negotiations with the PLO, have never indicated how they want the negotiations to end.

Breaking the Labor Party's own taboos by recognizing the PLO, putting Jerusalem on the bargaining table and announcing a readiness to abandon the Golan Heights are not a blueprint for a final settlement. True, the late Yitzhak Rabin once mentioned that he would like to see some kind of cooperation between Jordan, Israel and a Palestinian entity which would be "more than an autonomy but less than a state."

And Prime Minister Shimon Peres likes to recommend a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation and points to Benelux as an example of the kind of relationship he envisions between the three. But a confederation is an arrangement between two sovereigns, and Benelux is a union of three sovereign states.

Even more confusing is the way Labor sees the future of the Jewish communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Peres's close confidant, Minister Yossi Beilin, has said that when the final status is determined the settlements would be under Israeli sovereignty.

around it, will be incorporated in Israel. Reverting to ideas he propounded years ago, Peres has hinted that there should be "functional" rather than territorial sharing of power in the territories.

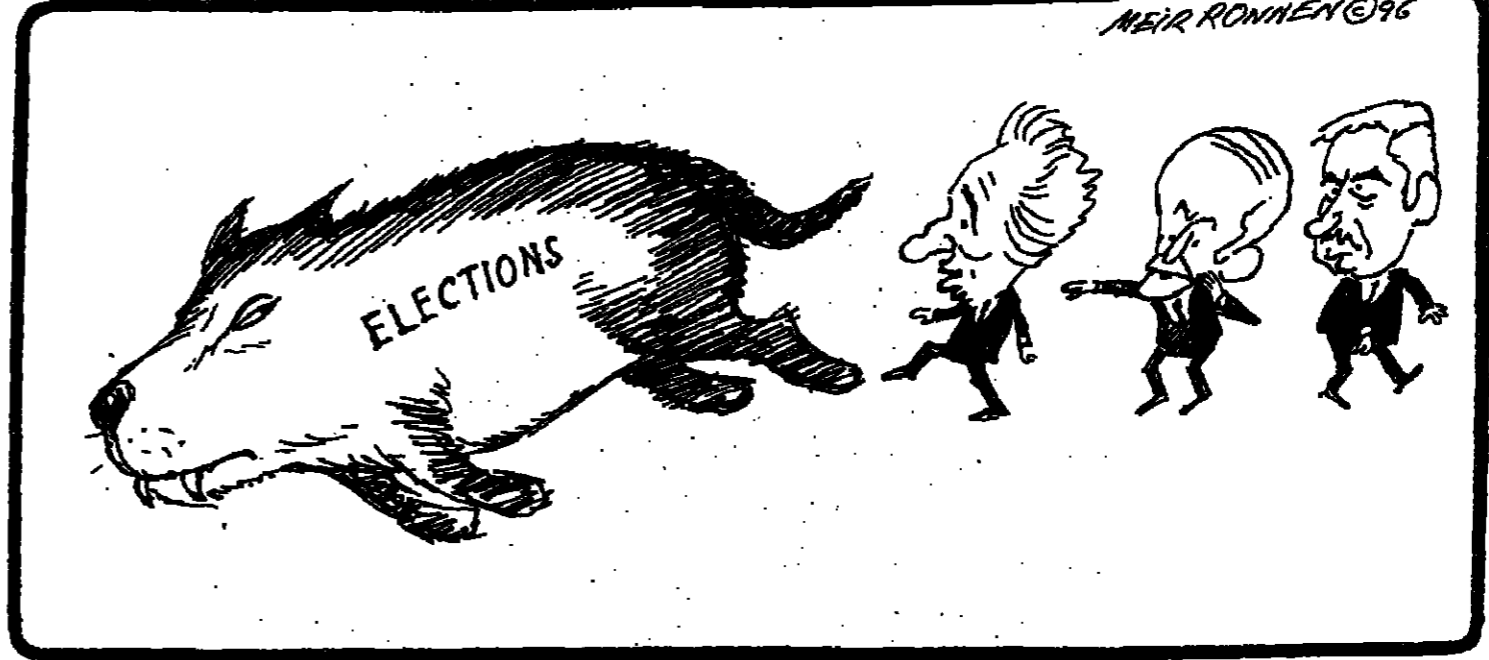
On the other hand, Labor's coalition partner Meretz has been consistent in its view of the future. It supports a Palestinian state bordering on the 1967 lines, and it believes there can be no peace unless all the settlements are evacuated and Jerusalem shared.

Chances are that Peres will continue to follow the Meretz program. But this is precisely what he is not telling the electorate. With remarkable vehemence he keeps insisting that Jerusalem will remain undivided and under Israel sovereignty, even as the academics who initiated the Oslo agreement secretly discuss sharing Jerusalem with Palestinian representatives, and Orient House continues functioning as the PA's foreign ministry in the heart of Jerusalem.

And while he continues to reassure the Jewish residents of the territories that they will not be removed, he cannot truly expect such a solution to work for a simple and compelling reason. He is a captive of the concept which begat the Oslo agreements in the first place: that Israel must find a solution acceptable to the PLO if it wants to achieve an agreement.

That Yasser Arafat and the PLO will not accept anything less than a Palestinian state along the June 4, 1967 lines with a capital in Jerusalem is a given. In fact, it would be silly for them not to expect the PLO-Israel negotiations to result in such a solution. After all, virtually the whole world community expects it, as does at least half of the governing coalition's Knesset members.

As the possibility of early elections looms, it would only be fair to the electorate if the major parties make their goals clear. Challenging the opposition to reveal its "alternative" is fair enough, provided Labor, too, makes clear where it is headed.



A censorship law for the '90s

ISRAEL inherited from the British Mandate a draconian censorship law. In the early days of the state, military censorship, which had power over the press, the mail and other forms of communication, became a department in the IDF's military intelligence.

In 1949, the year in which I drafted the first agreement between the press and the IDF, a delegation of prominent journalists met with Yigal Yadin, who was then operations chief of the IDF and later chief of staff. The journalists recommended creating a system of censorship which would serve the national interest of the state.

As director of military intelligence, I was sent to negotiate with the editors, whose delegation included Gershon Schocken, Herzl Rosenblum, Azriel Carlebach, Yosef Heftman, Herzl Berger, Arieh Dissentzick, and Isaac Remba.

These newspapermen represented the public's right to know, and followed the example of the best of the world's press. Nevertheless, they were only too aware of the delicate nature of our new society, and of the considerable dangers of our defense situation. They proposed that censorship be applied on a basis of agreement, with the last word being left to the military.

As an example of the need for censorship, I cited the problem we faced with the Egyptian order of battle in the War of Independence in the Isdud area (now Ashdod). The Egyptian forces were poised for a major offensive

CHAIM HERZOG

against Tel Aviv, while Givati Brigade troops kept them at bay.

I showed the journalists how our major intelligence breakthrough came about as a result of the publication of a photograph of the brigade commander in the Isdud area in an Egyptian newspaper. Largely on the basis of this information, we were able to perceive the order of battle of the Egyptian army in the area.

We set up a public committee representing the editors, the army and the general public, and a tribunal, again representing the

very strong sanctions in the event that the laws are broken. This is vital, especially since we have not achieved complete security.

The question is: What is the correct balance in today's conditions between the right of the public to know and the duty of the state to protect its vital defense interests?

If we assume that, from a purely military security point of view, control and sanctions are necessary, then the best solution to the present impasse would be a new agreement between the government and editors. But this agreement would have to obligate all the editors without exception. If some of them continue to maintain an independent attitude and refuse to accept a ruling on censorship, there is no solution but legislation.

As it stands, there are breaches of the censorship law, there is no agreement, and editors tend to follow the example set by the most extreme culprit.

It is vital that there be a proper framework which can stand up to scrutiny in the courts and make each editor responsible. The press has to be restrained, in a limited manner, but in a way which does not compromise our basic security interests.

The proposed law must be sensible. It must be adapted to our modern age, and must relate only to matters of national security and the sanctity of human life. It must be backed by someone of the appropriate moral and intellectual standing.

Only thus can we achieve the correct balance between the public's rights and the state's duties.

The writer, Israel's sixth president, served two terms as director of military intelligence.

A new balance must be struck between the public's right to know and vital national security interests

editors, the army and the public, which is still in operation.

The approach to censorship in those days would not be accepted today. Subjects such as the death of a soldier, an unsuccessful operation, or a plane crash, were not allowed to be published. And sometimes, when it was applied to issues whose military nature was in considerable doubt, censorship would not have stood up to the scrutiny of the Supreme Court.

But the journalists proved most cooperative. David Ben-Gurion ordered the application of censorship in four specific areas. It was forbidden to publish details about immigration or the origin of the waves of immigration; about contacts with countries with no formal relations

gates withdrew their objections to our military censorship.

In the course of time, the limits to censorship were clearly set out, and the right to know made considerable inroads, in many cases justifiably. Media coverage of events has become almost immediate, and competition between the various media is growing every day.

But there is a basic and at times disturbing change of attitude on the part of some of the media to national security, as they understand it. And the censorship law has not always been applied wisely. Hence the breakdown which has led to a deterioration in the censor's level of control.

There are cases, however few, which require a military censorship to be applied together with

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE JERUSALEM UN RESOLUTION

Sir, - As the Jerusalem issue becomes more prominent, more uninformed reporting and commentary appear, stating: "The 1947 UN Partition Plan that created the State of Israel called for putting Jerusalem under international rule."

Unfortunately, the reporters and commentators quote only a portion of General Assembly Resolution 181 dealing with Jerusalem, thereby creating an inaccurate impression, as the all too few who are familiar with the resolution and its creation have pointed out.

Under a section called "Duration of the special regime," the Partition Resolution stated that the international regime for Jerusalem was to last 10 years. At the end of that period, there was to be a referendum of Jerusalem residents to determine the city's status. Since the Israeli side knew that Jews had formed a majority in Jerusalem for a century, they had no doubt as to the outcome of such a referendum. Today the outcome of such a vote would be even more demonstrative.

The Arab side, it will be remembered, rejected the UN Partition Plan.

Winnipeg, Canada. ED FEUER

KNESSET ABSENTEEISM

Sir, - Many crucial laws are enacted or struck down in the Knesset with fewer than 50 members present and voting. This state of affairs is a mockery of the democratic process and a flouting of the will of the majority. I am tired of paying taxes to support the salaries, expense accounts and perks of 120 MKs when so few of them bother to exert themselves to show up and vote in the plenum.

The number 120 is not a sacred one. We are told that it symbolically represents the legendary 120 members of the Antisei Knesset Hagdola convened by Ezra in 516 BCE. I suggest that we mount a campaign to reduce the number of MKs to 55. Moreover, when we finally achieve direct election of MKs we can then vote out of office those of the remaining 55 who don't show up for voting.

Petah Tikva. STANLEY LEVIN

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Sir, - In his letter concerning the proposed Trans-Israel Highway (January 26), Dr. Fulder writes, correctly, that it "will force even greater reliance on cars for transport, marginalizing the public transport services even further."

Public transport in Israel has been marginalized badly by the religious parties who prevent it from running on weekends. During the week, many car owners prefer public transport, for all the good reasons. Come Friday afternoon, the only way to take your family to the beach, picnic, Galilee or Eilat is by family car, with one sad and one tragic result:

1) A large part of Israel's population can't afford a car and, without public transport, finds itself under house arrest on weekends.

2) Many deadly road accidents are caused by otherwise good but part-time show-distance drivers, taking their families on a long trip. The common vector, "lost control of his car," often conceals the fact that the driver has simply fallen asleep. The victims would have been in much better hands; and in a sturdier vehicle, riding a bus driven by a professional driver.

I wonder whether our religious authorities could be persuaded that this is a matter of pikuah nefesh - saving a human lives - which, according to Halacha, takes precedence over everything else, including sanctity of the Shabbat, but I doubt it. They will probably reply that this is God, inflicting the death penalty on sinners.

ZYGMUNT FRANKEL Tel Aviv.

CARTOONS

Sir, - I wonder how many people David and Nadia Matar questioned when determining that "not one person understands or appreciates Meir Ronnen's 'so-called' cartoons." (Letters, January 29). All the people I speak to find Ronnen to be funny, witty, informative and often brilliant (usually not even requiring a caption, which is the sign of a successful caricaturist). My friends and I, on the other hand, find Oleg to be offensive, frighteningly unamusing and at times antisemitic.

Jerusalem. ASHER WEILL

UNWARRANTED CRITICISM

Sir, - As a former diplomat who served for 42 years, including in posts with large Jewish communities (in the US and Latin America), and in my capacity as adviser on world Jewish affairs to the Foreign Ministry, I was astonished by A.B. Yehoshua's "we don't need you" message to the 10th Assembly of the prestigious World Jewish Congress, as reported in your issue of January 24.

I don't know what irked me more: Yehoshua's concepts and his unwarranted criticism of Diaspora Jews, or the tone of his lashing. We need the support of the Diaspora in every respect and no measure of aggression can convince us otherwise. Jewish support, especially in the US, is crucial and will be more so in the near future when Jerusalem, refugee issues and final borders are to be determined. We now enjoy warm support in the US, but there are Buchanans and Fairbanks all over to worry about.

Diaspora financial contributions, albeit smaller than ever before, are still important in social areas, and I shudder when I think of what would happen to our universities, hospitals and many other institutions without the massive input from abroad. Let us not dispense so lightly with the Diaspora contributions which, at the same time, serve as a means of Jewish identification with Israel.

There is a need for a permanent dialogue to discuss and update Israel's relations with the Diaspora, and these exchanges must be respectful and void of this "holier than thou" attitude which marks Yehoshua's unmerited onslaught. Our Jewish brethren in the Diaspora deserve better than the "justice" meted out to them by our most prominent writer.

Jerusalem. GIDEON TADMOR

COST OF LIVING

Sir, - I appreciate your recent headline, "Lowest inflation rate in 26 years." It gave me warm fuzzies. That helps offset the feeling that everything - like arnona, petrol, rent (in dollars) and electricity - just became more expensive!

Tiberias. JAMES MARLOW

When all good men cast their vote

ALLAN E. SHAPIRO

THE new Knesset and the directly elected prime minister should be chosen before the start of the negotiations on the final settlement with the Palestinians. Under the terms of the Oslo agreement, these negotiations are scheduled to begin in May. Before they commence, there should be a renewed electoral mandate.

The issue is legitimacy. A government resting on a razor-thin Knesset majority cannot make decisions on fundamentals without risking a severe popular schism. What is more fundamental than a final settlement? Rabin's assassination obscured these simple facts of political life. The legitimacy of the opposition, not of the government, became an issue.

This was particularly true of extra-parliamentary opposition. The major immediate result achieved by Yigal Amir was that the Tabá agreements for the evacuation of major Palestinian population centers and the redeployment of Israeli forces were carried out without serious difficulty. This did not seem possible before the assassination.

In those days, there was a strong case for advancing the date of the elections and delaying the execution of the interim agreements pending the decision at the polls. This was the demand of the opposition. President Ezer Weizman, for his part, called on the government to make clear its terms for a final settlement.

However, early elections then would have taken place under particularly inauspicious circumstances. These related both to the prevailing political atmosphere within Israel and to relations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Early elections, after the Knesset approval of the Tabá agreements and before the assassination, would hardly have been a festival of democracy.

Quite the contrary. The general atmosphere of incitement to violence would have been focused on the electoral process.

It is always dangerous to guess what would have happened if history had taken a different course - in this case, if the hand of the assassin had not intervened. But it is fairly safe to venture the guess that elections under those circumstances would have been

Ideological conflict has been decidedly attenuated.

Not only has the political climate changed. To some extent, so have the issues. Today, from all indications, the great mass of voters are in the center of the political map. To reach them, the policy positions of the major blocs will move closer together.

Moledet's Rehavam "Gandi" Ze'evi knows what he is talking

Forget the parties - early elections would benefit the country

the dirtiest and most violent in Israel's history.

Meanwhile, terrorism would not only have continued. It would have intensified. Faisal Husseini, early in the aftermath of Oslo, declared that the ability of the Palestinian Authority to cope with terrorism depended on the geographical extent of the area under its control and the degree of control it exercised. Without the redeployment, not only its ability, but also its motivation to eliminate violence directed against Israelis from the territories would have been limited.

about: The Likud may not become another version of Labor, as he warned, but they will not be poles apart. The major effort of both camps will be directed at winning votes from the moderate center, not from the ideological extremes, such as Moledet.

This is already happening in both major parties. This week the spotlight has focused on the changes within the Likud, which involve, in effect, an ex post facto ratification of the Oslo accords

POSTSCRIPTS

TWO WOULD-BE stickup artists had the bad luck to blunder into a bar where the revelers were 100 police officers celebrating a colleague's retirement.

Somehow the "Closed for Private Party" sign wasn't enough to deter Clarissa Wynn, 20, and Davy Sutton, 43.

The two lured the bartender away from her post under the pretense they were making a delivery. When the two brandished a knife, the bartender scrambled back to the party. Several officers made the arrest. "It's pretty dumb," one officer said.

and their aftermath. Ronni Milo has even claimed credit for them as the realization of Menachem Begin's Camp David autonomy proposal.

A similar process started in Labor soon after Shimon Peres took office. Overtures to the religious bloc represented a substantial change at the conceptual level. Functional compromise, which Peres has long favored, unlike the territorial separation that Rabin had in mind, does not rule out the continued existence of the settlements in Judea and Samaria.

The sovereignty of these areas would remain undefined in perpetuity. They would be ruled under some form of condominium, or joint Palestinian-Israeli rule. A future Palestinian state, under this plan, would have full sovereignty in Gaza, along with joint authority in the rest of the territories.

More than early elections favor one party or the other, they favor the political system as a whole. The time is ripe. Leaders of both parties should go for it.

The writer is a legal and political commentator.

BRITAIN'S QUEEN Mother advertised for a butler in a suburban local newspaper because she wanted to give job opportunities to unemployed men living outside London.

"Under Butler required for Royal Household in London. Please apply to Comptroller, Clarence House," said the ad in the Reading Evening Post.

The Queen Mother's spokesman said it was now royal policy to advertise outside London. "That has been a policy since unemployment was really bad," he said.

Ambassador's error

MOSHE ZAK

AMERICAN Ambassador Martin Indyk was wrong. In a lecture at the Tel Aviv Rotary Club, he said that DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh, by his willingness to come to Gaza, is sending a message that "he is attempting to accommodate himself to the evolving coexistence in the region."

This is an error, both from the historical and conceptual perspectives. Hawatmeh's statements do not contain messages to Israel. He has said exactly the same in the past, and to this day he stands firmly for the continuation of the armed struggle.

To err is human, and ambassadors are human. But Indyk is not just a diplomat. He is also a scholar of Middle East affairs, and he is well aware that Hawatmeh holds the copyright on the notion of "establishing a Palestinian national entity in the West Bank and Gaza." He advanced the idea more than 20 years ago, and there is no reason why he should not want to be a part of it when it comes into being.

In 1974, Hawatmeh was the first to raise the idea of a Palestinian national authority in the West Bank and Gaza, an idea which was later accepted by the PLO as a transitional stage to the whole of Palestine. His idea of a Palestinian authority is not a product of the present peace process under US guidance, but of the Soviet line at that time.

This rhetoric did not prevent Hawatmeh's organization from carrying on the armed struggle against Israel. In that very year, it carried out murderous attacks in Ma'alot, Beit She'an, and Jerusalem. Hawatmeh still does not dissociate himself from the armed struggle; he is only prepared to say that he will not harm civilians, only soldiers.

Israelis who are not familiar with Hawatmeh's dialectic may be impressed by his statement against "a slaughter of the innocents," but Indyk knows that Hawatmeh reserves the right to decide who is "innocent." And as far as he is concerned, the terrorist from Jenin who fatally stabbed St-Sgt. Emdad Tal in the Dotan camp on Tuesday is innocent.

Indyk's assertion that even the extremists among the Palestinians accept Israel's existence was apparently meant to bolster that misconception of the Israelis responsible for Oslo - that the Palestinians are relinquishing their dream of the whole of Palestine.

On this basis, the transfer of the terrorists' command post from Damascus to Gaza is understood as a positive step, for now the commanders can, in theory, vote in the Palestinian National Council in favor of the changes to the Palestinian Covenant promised by Yasser Arafat.

On this model of creaky justification, it may be claimed that the thousands of terrorists due to arrive in police uniform from Libya and Lebanon are Arafat's faithful supporters, and will strengthen the forces that will foil attempts at terrorism.

Hawatmeh et al haven't relinquished the armed struggle against Israel

According to this erroneous formulation, the agreement between Arafat and Hamas to suspend terrorist operations in Israel until after the Knesset elections can be explained as a step toward peace. In fact, it is a temporary cease-fire which will allow Arafat to gain all the territory promised him in Oslo 2, and will guarantee future coordination of the negotiations conducted by the Palestinian Authority and Hamas operations.

Then both will be able to squeeze as many concessions as possible out of the negotiations for the permanent agreement. MANY Israelis, and many Americans, are trying to perceive the Oslo agreement as the "end of history," in other words, the end of the ideological era. This may be its effect in Israeli society, which is now so excited by pragmatic solutions that it is letting go of the ideologies which directed it

through 100 years of Zionism. This Israeli U-mun has won the applause of foreign professors and diplomats, who at the same time have expressed their understanding of the motives of Palestinian society, as reflected in the PLO and its affiliated organizations. Foreign observers are impressed by the pragmatic image Israel has given Palestinian institutions to help them raise the funds the PA needs.

In point of fact, one would have to search long and hard to find any change of ideology on the Palestinian side, apart from the step-by-step strategy set forth in 1974.

Careful examination of Arafat's views reveals traces of the step-by-step approach present at the very beginning of his career. The base Arafat has now established in the territories under the guise of "Palestinian forces" marks the realization of a dream from before 1967, when Arafat talked about involving Arab countries in a war to bring about the occupation of the West Bank by Israel and its transformation into a base for a popular war against Israel.

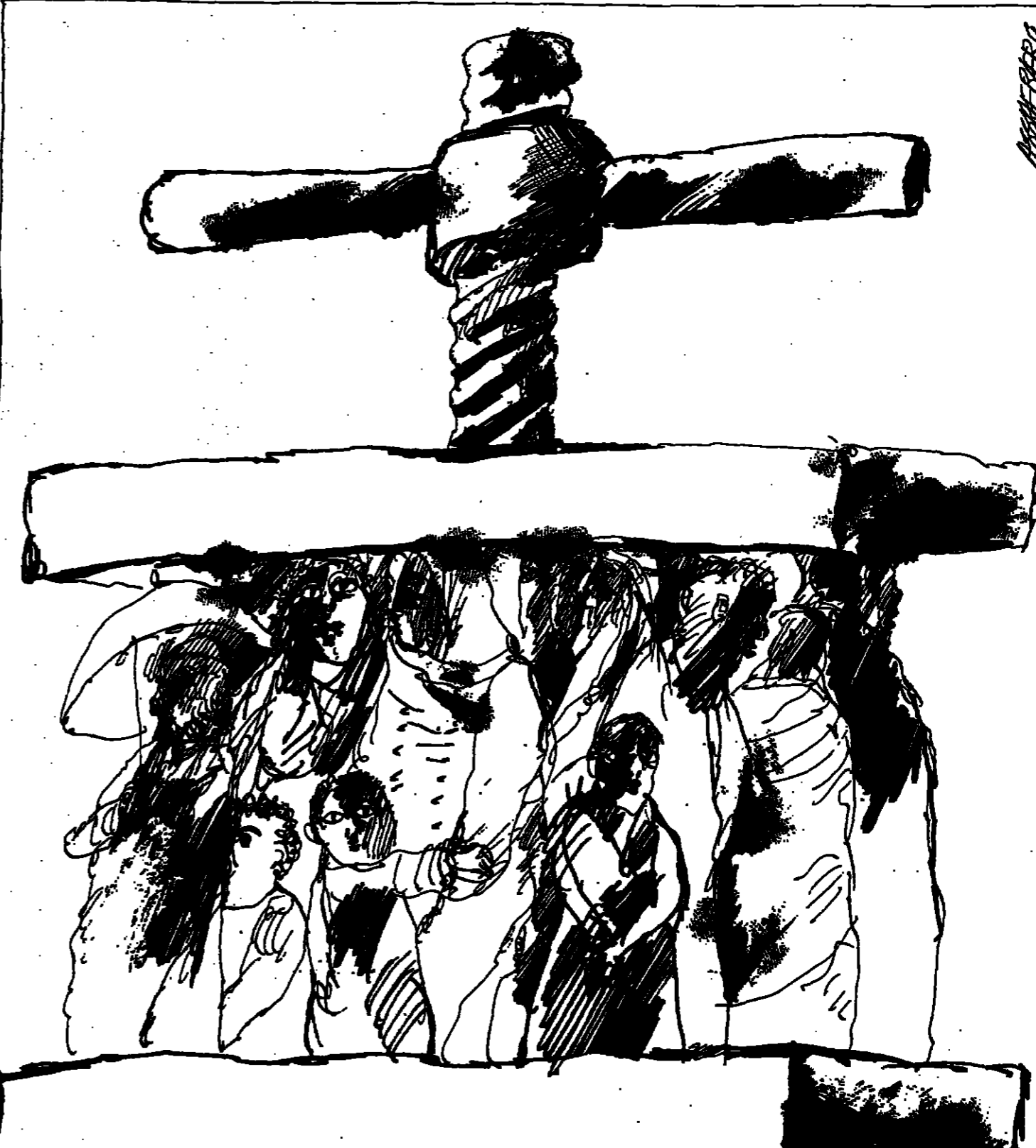
The Israeli authorities managed to frustrate the immediate implementation of Arafat's plan. The terrorist command posts were forced over the border into Jordan. From there, they fled to Lebanon. Israel caused Arafat's expulsion from Beirut, and Syrian President Hafez Assad forced his expulsion from Tripoli.

Now Arafat has brought the wheel round full circle. He is bringing Fatah terrorists back from Libya and Lebanon to their bases in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, and made Israel permit the command posts of the rival organizations to move into Gaza.

He is willing to pay the price for this by speaking out in favor of coexistence, without straying from his insistence that Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine, and that Palestinians have the right of return.

The calm prevailing in Israel is a hostage in Hamas's hands. It depends on their keeping their promise to Arafat until after the Knesset elections.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.



The day they stopped believing

ESTHER HERTZOG

THE Ethiopian immigrants came to Israel all wrapped up in a package deal.

The rabbinate agreed to their coming in exchange for the letting of a drop of blood from the sexual organ of each adult male (a confirmation of their Jewishness, which incidentally has still not been fully recognized), and with the proviso that their children would attend religious schools. The Ethiopians agreed.

Most of them underwent the bloodletting ritual, a physically, spiritually and collectively humiliating business, and their children go to state religious schools. They were told it was for their own good, and they believed it.

They were all, in a bundle, placed in absorption centers, and the children were put into absorption classes. They were told it was for the sake of their advancement and their integration, and they really wanted to believe it.

All of them were given blood tests, and it was explained to anyone who enquired that "they" had many contagious diseases. They were given preventive pills en masse, which caused horrendous stomachaches. These they suffered stoically - or threw away the pills secretly - and didn't understand why Israelis were being warned not to come near them for six months.

Their rabbis were dispatched like a pack of fools to a course at the "real" rabbinate given by Israeli rabbis, and the children were sent away to religious boarding schools. They were told that this would make them equal in the eyes of "kosher" Israeli

Jews, and that their children would have an equal opportunity to go on to higher education.

And if their kesim hadn't been barred from the rabbinate, and if most of their children hadn't failed their bagrut, they might almost have believed it.

And then they were all branded with the mark of AIDS, and it was even explained to them that it had nothing to do with racism.

And then, like Ahad Ha'am's Jews faced with blood-libel, they couldn't believe any longer. This

and that even the Ethiopians couldn't take.

WHAT THE authorities are now saying is that they were only trying to preserve the Ethiopian immigrants' sense of honor - but the immigrants have stopped believing either the facts as presented, or in the authorities' good intentions. So have I.

"There's an optical illusion here about the proportion of HIV carriers among Ethiopian immigrants," said Dr. Rommy Shtrark-

would be more wary of Israelis who had backpacked abroad and come into contact with people they didn't know than Jews from Ethiopia.

But this stand, explicit as it was, didn't prevent the reporter from continuing to treat AIDS among Ethiopian immigrants as an established fact.

The doctor then went into great detail in the interview about a Joint Distribution Committee-funded project he was involved in to educate the Ethiopians about AIDS.

For a project of this type you need a severe social or medical problem. And now the doctor had a problem - he seemed to be contradicting himself.

Is there or isn't there a huge risk, above the average, of AIDS in the Ethiopian community here?

I have a theory: There are various interested parties here, and all of them want to preserve the Ethiopians as a mass to be manipulated, concentrated in absorption centers (which need a reason to go on receiving funds for existing), and dominated.

Once it has been "established" that the Ethiopians as a community pose an AIDS danger, they can be smeared with mud, tricked, their children isolated, and their blood tossed into the garbage bucket.

For long years to come, the Ethiopians will go on filling a mystical, much-needed role for researchers, absorption organizations, and the media.

The writer lectures on sociology and anthropology at Beit Berl College in Kfar Sava.

'Tain't broke, but needs fixin'

MARK A. HELLER

THE IDF is too big. According to Brig-Gen. Israel Einhorn, recently retired head of planning in the manpower branch, about 20 percent of male inductees are released before the end of their compulsory three-year service and thousands more are redundant, filling out authorized slots while having little of substance to do.

And only 15-20 percent of women soldiers are doing necessary and satisfying jobs; the rest are there not because the army needs them, but because the national service laws force the IDF to conscript them. In short, the IDF has a severe problem of hidden unemployment.

There is nothing new about this problem. For years, observers have watched the administrative and support echelon grow more rapidly than the combat echelon, and have described with increasing concern the phenomena of swollen directorates, staff bodies and headquarters, and inflated numbers of higher-ranking officers. An army which once prided itself on its high "tooth-to-tail" (combat forces to support forces) ratio has become increasingly bureaucratized.

One reason for the change has been the emergence of patterns of behavior, such as empire building, typical of any large organization. Another has been the large increases in the annual intake as immigration peaked and the children of baby-boomers started to reach military age.

These developments did not go unnoticed. Study commissions and internal analyses pointed out the trends and proposed a variety of recommendations. Every new chief of staff paid lip service to the need to make the army smaller and more agile ("lean and mean"). The age cutoff for immigrants was lowered, and exemptions and early releases became easier to obtain, especially for women soldiers.

But the political leadership, which bears ultimate responsibility for national defense and for integrating the defense effort into national welfare in its broadest sense, has preferred to avoid any fundamental changes.

In principle, there are three broad solutions to the problem: • Selective service. The army is not a social-welfare agency but a military organization with a specific mission - defending the country against external and potential mili-

itary threats - and it can best do that by mobilizing and investing only in the resources, including manpower, suited to that mission.

Let the IDF take the best for its mission-defined needs, and let the rest, including most women, make their contribution and find their satisfaction elsewhere.

• Shorten compulsory service. The army is not just a fighting machine but also a major socializing agency, perhaps the most important in the country. Given its traditional centrality and prestige, army service provides a cachet, and those who do not serve (except for legitimate medical reasons) suffer from some kind of stigma.

The IDF's severe problem: hidden unemployment

So preserve the current system, but shorten the term of compulsory service. Before 1967, when Israel's manpower constraints were more severe and the region was much more hostile, male soldiers only served 30 months.

• Reduce reserve service. The main purpose of the reserves is to provide a force that can be mobilized in time of emergency to reinforce the standing army. To maintain their effectiveness, the reserves need periodic training and refresher courses. But reserves, especially combat reserves, spend much of their time in "current security," patrols, garrison duty, etc. Not all of this work needs to be done by elite forces. Some of it can be assumed by upgrading the underemployed "tail" in the standing army, leaving reservists more time to make money and be with their families.

NONE OF these solutions is complete, and each has serious drawbacks. Technical questions include the effect of advanced technology and required instruction and training programs, and the interchangeability of noncombat regulars and

combat reserves.

But the social-political challenges are just as daunting. A revision of the national service laws, for example, must consider the question of compulsory nonmilitary service and take into account such issues as women's rights and responsibilities, relations between religious and secular, and the status of minorities.

Any change will undoubtedly affect some people adversely, probably leading to protests by civilian groups and resistance from within the military establishment. All these complications explain why governments have thus far preferred a fourth option - do nothing.

There is an old American adage which says, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." No one suggests that the IDF is broken. On the contrary, it is, despite distortions and inefficiencies, the most powerful army in the region and still one of the world's most capable and effective.

But there is something seriously wrong with a system which denies individual choice more than is absolutely necessary, forces the army to waste and misuse people, and denies them to other sectors of society which need them more. The reason we have political leadership is to fix things like this.

The writer is senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University.

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KURT SCHORK
SARAJEVO

NATO called its warplanes into action to warn off Bosnian soldiers in a confrontation with NATO ground troops, in the first such use of close air support since the peacekeepers entered Bosnia, NATO said yesterday.

The standoff ended peacefully after two US A-10 "tank-buster" planes flew over an area of southern Bosnia where Spanish soldiers had found 30 Bosnian government troops with big stocks of weapons and ammunition inside a "demilitarized" zone.

NATO said the Bosnians agreed to be disarmed and leave the area after an hour on Wednesday night.

"Sometimes a show of force is a good idea and it saves you having to use force," NATO spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Mark Rayner said. "We're not worried that this (incident) is a challenge to the peace agreement."

Two NATO vehicles came under fire in the Serb-held Sarajevo suburb Ilidza on Wednesday evening, bringing to six the number of sniping attacks on peacekeeping soldiers there since Sunday.

The commander of NATO forces in Bosnia, US Navy Admiral Leighton Smith, said a sniper was hard to spot.

"But boy, let me tell you, if we do see him he had better be fast and be clad in bullet-proof stuff. Because we will attack without warning," Smith told reporters in Washington.

Serb military forces must this weekend quit the Sarajevo suburbs they held throughout the war as the Moslem and Croat Bosnian government begins to take control. Many Serb civilians are leaving.

Moslems and Croats living in the Serb-held district of Grbavica said they suffered a nightly reign of terror at the hands of Serb men angry over having to abandon the area under the terms of the Bosnian peace agreement.

But Sarajevo's Bridge of Brotherhood and Unity opened for virtually unrestricted civilian foot traffic, reuniting government and Serb-held areas in the city center for the first time in nearly four years.

(Reuters)



Miners from Donbass, Ukraine protest outside government offices in Kiev yesterday after beginning an open-ended strike. (Reuters)

500,000 Russian coalminers strike

TIMOTHY HERITAGE
MOSCOW

UP to half a million coalminers began a nationwide strike in Russia yesterday to demand payment of months of wage arrears in a potentially damaging blow to President Boris Yeltsin.

Tens of thousands of miners also went on strike in neighboring Ukraine, demanding their unpaid wages and disability benefits.

The likely political and economic impact of the strike in Russia was hard to gauge because some miners were embarking on an all-out, indefinite stoppage and others planned to refuse coal deliveries to consumers for only 48 hours.

Russia's coalmining monopoly Rosugol put the number of strikers at more than 300,000. It said 118 of Russia's 182 pits and 27 of its 63 open-cast mines had joined the strike.

Union leaders said about 500,000 workers

had downed tools to press demands for the government to settle the wage bill and increase state support for the coal industry, which has been hit hard by Western-style reforms and faces tough times ahead.

The Russian government, which shares the wage burden with Rosugol, says it is caught in a vicious circle where it cannot afford to pay all the miners' wages on time because it is owed money by enterprises which have not paid for coal deliveries.

In Ukraine, a trade union representative in the aging Donbass coalfield said 104 of 251 pits were taking part in an open-ended strike.

Nearly 100 others were refusing to load coal. Most Ukrainian miners have received monthly wages equivalent to between \$50 and \$75 since October. Others have not received disability payments since July.

Miners' protests have in the past carried political weight in both Ukraine and Russia.

A nine-week strike in 1991 weakened the authority of then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and helped boost Boris Yeltsin, who went on to be elected Russian president in June 1991.

But this time, the strike was an unwelcome 65th birthday gift for Yeltsin: A prolonged stoppage could help his Communist foes in the run-up to the June 16 presidential election, in which Yeltsin is expected to run.

(Reuters)

Chirac to Congress: Nuke tests are over

WASHINGTON (AP) - French President Jacques Chirac promised the US Congress yesterday that France has finished its nuclear testing "once and for all."

Several Democrats were boycotting the speech, saying France's end to testing just two days before his US visit came too late to win their applause. "We return the insult with our insult," said Eleanor Holmes Norton, congressional delegate from the nation's capital.

"Together we must promote disarmament and combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction," Chirac said in an official English translation of his speech provided by the French government.

"France has finished once and for all its nuclear testing, after a final series designed to give us the assurance that our deterrent capability is reliable and safe," he said.

President Clinton hailed Chirac, on the first visit by a French president in a dozen years, as "the leader of a great nation and great people."

Welcoming the French leader at the White House, Clinton stressed the two nations' long ties and did not mention the nuclear dispute.

Chirac abruptly canceled the testing program Monday after the largest blast of the last series of Pacific tests on Saturday.

Clinton, at the White House for one of two scheduled meetings with Chirac, said, "Together we are raising the flag of an undivided Europe. We are transforming NATO to meet new challenges."

In his arrival remarks at the White House, Chirac also steered clear of the testing issue.

The Institute for the Advancement of Education in Jaffa and the Beit Shemesh Educational Center extend sincerest condolences to **George Balint** on the passing of his beloved wife **IRENE BALINT** יריה in London on January 31 (10 Shvat 5756)

Dr. David J. Portowicz, Rabbi Meir Moscovitz, Directors Teachers and children

Sanz Medical Center, Laniado Hospital, Kiryat Sanz, Netanya, Israel and The British Friends extend their sincerest condolences to **GEORGE BALINT** on the passing of his beloved wife **IRENE BALINT** יריה

המקום יתום אחרים בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

Barry Bodner Leo Felner
Rabbi Meier S. Eisemann Rabbi Natan Morowitz

THE ACADEMIC COLLEGE OF JUDEA AND SAMARIA extends its deeply felt sympathy to **George Balint and the entire Balint family** on the passing of **IRENE BALINT** יריה

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The students and teachers of the college
The Board of Governors
The World Friends of the College

To mark the end of the shloshim for **URI EPHRAIM PEARLMAN** יריה the unveiling of the tombstone will be held on Monday, February 5, 1996 (Tu B'Shvat 5756), at 3:00 p.m., at the Har Hamenuhot Cemetery, Jerusalem

The family

In very deep sorrow we announce the death of our dear mother, grandmother and great grandmother **Rebbetzin SADIE GOLDMAN** יריה
Widow of Rabbi Dr. Solomon Goldman

Passed away on Monday January 29, 1996 (8 Shvat, 5756)
Shiva at Galei Zahav, 20 Sderot Nitza, Netanya

The Bereaved Family

YESHIVAT SHA'ALVIM
We mourn the passing of our dear friend and devoted colleague **HaRav SHYA LEBOR** יריה

and extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to Rabbani Sarah, Avi, Fickie and our own Rav David and their families.

המקום יתום אחרים בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים ולא תחסיהן לדאבהן קוד

Rav Mallen Galinsky Rav Avraham Avidan
Dean Rosh HaYeshiva

Libya denies giving \$1b. to Farrakhan

TUNIS (Reuters) - Libya yesterday denied it had given black American Moslem leader Louis Farrakhan \$1 billion to set up an Islamic lobby in the United States.

"We strongly deny that the Jamahiriya (Libya) contributed this amount," the official Libyan news agency JANA said, commenting on US media reports that Farrakhan would be summoned by Congress over Libya's alleged financial support.

Libyan leader Muammer Gaddafi vowed in September to spend up to \$1b. to set up such a lobby.

Hizbullah demands apology from new US envoy to Beirut

BEIRUT (Reuters) - The Hizbullah yesterday demanded an apology from new US ambassador Richard Jones who was quoted by Lebanese newspapers as calling the Moslem militant faction and its MPs terrorists.

"The US ambassador's remarks are a hostile start for an official who wants to represent his country in a country that has suffered a lot from American policy and its aggressiveness and mistakes," Hizbullah said in a statement.

The group, which has eight members in Lebanon's 128-seat parliament, said the reported re-

marks were "a flagrant insult to the Lebanese people and their parliament and necessitate apologizing to the people and its representatives."

It said the Lebanese government should refuse to accept such a message from Jones when he presented his credentials.

Jones, who is due to take up his post this month, was quoted by the Beirut daily *an-Nahar* as saying in an interview in Washington published on Tuesday "the United States considers Hizbullah to be a terrorist organization."

Poll: Forbes favored in New Hampshire primary

BOSTON (AP) - Publisher Steve Forbes has surged into the lead among Republican presidential candidates less than three weeks before the New Hampshire primary, a new survey of likely voters shows.

Forbes passed Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole in the poll, conducted by the *Boston Globe* and WBZ-TV, and would receive 31 percent of the vote if the primary were held now, the *Globe* reported in yesterday's editions. Forbes' gain compared with 17 percent support he received in a similar survey three weeks ago.

Dole, who has been the front-runner for the past year, received 22 percent in the latest poll, while political commentator Patrick Buchanan got 11 percent.

But the poll also showed most voters want to know more about Forbes - a 48-year-old multimillionaire magazine heir who has never held elective office - an indicator that the race in New Hampshire's February 20 primary remains volatile, the newspaper said.

Six other candidates lagged behind, although former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander improved to 9 percent from 5 percent in the previous survey.

Texas Sen. Phil Gramm had 7 percent, Indiana Sen. Dick Lugar received 3 percent, Illinois businessman Morry Taylor and radio talk-show host Alan Keyes got 1 percent each, and California Rep. Bob Dornan received less than 1 percent.

The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 5 percentage points.

The survey suggested that Forbes' appeal is based increasingly on his status as an outsider to Washington politics, even as support for his plan to replace the federal graduated income tax with a 17 percent flat tax has slipped, the *Globe* said.

"Forbes maintains tremendous momentum. He continues to grow as the Dole campaign basically collapses," said Gerry Chernivsky of KRC Communications Research, which conducted the poll.

"But no one should assume Forbes is going to win New Hampshire. He's the front-runner of the moment in a very fluid race."

WORLD BRIEFS

Ex-minister named to form Italian gov't
ROME (Reuters) - President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro named a 71-year-old former cabinet minister, Antonio Di Pietro, as prime minister-designate yesterday to try to form Italy's 55th government since World War Two.

Rebel jet bombs central Kabul, seven killed
KABUL (AP) - A lone rebel jet bombed a market district in the heart of the Afghan capital yesterday, killing seven people and wounding dozens more.

The jet streaked overhead, unscathed by the city's anti-aircraft defenses, dropping four bombs on central Kabul.

A government military commander said the aircraft belonged to the rebel Taliban militia, which has vowed to crush President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government.

'Mass grave wasn't for Holocaust victims'
VIENNA (AP) - Experts looking for the origins of skeletons found in Upper Austria earlier this week yesterday said the dead in the mass grave were not Holocaust victims.

Earlier reports, and Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, had suggested that the human remains found were Hungarian Jews who perished in or near Nazi death camps in the area.

Historians and other experts said the human remains were of men aged 18-22 with teeth in good condition, which they said suggests they were soldiers.

Sri Lanka: We'll step up attacks on Tamil rebels

COLOMBO (Reuters) - Sri Lankan Justice Minister G.L. Peiris yesterday vowed to intensify military operations against Tamil Tiger rebels after a suicide bomb in the heart of Colombo killed up to 80 people.

"This calamity underlines the paramount need to defeat the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). Military operations will be intensified in the north and east," he told a news conference.

Police supervising rescue work at the central bank and seven nearby buildings gutted by the blast, said eight charred bodies were unearthed from the rubble yesterday.

They said rescue workers expected to find at least a dozen more.

GOLD FORETOLD

In yet another accurate prediction, on November 27, 1995 Brian Marber, world renowned investment analyst, forecast an imminent rise of gold prices from a low of \$383.15 per ounce.

That day's edition of *The Marber Report*, represented in Israel by CommStock Trading Ltd., said: "The bull market has begun. If certain parameters are met, substantial profits are available."

Since that prediction, gold has broken the barrier and reached a high of \$409 per ounce. An almost 6% return on original investment.

To discuss the remarkable accuracy of *The Marber Report* and to obtain a complimentary copy, you are invited to call Michael Zwebnier in our Jerusalem office, (02) 244963.

The Marber Report covers international currencies, interest rates and precious metals. Past performance no guarantee of future results.

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Jerusalem Post
Chirac to Congress: Nuke tests are over

NEWS IN FOCUS

The Jerusalem Post Friday, February 2, 1996



The good news for Ethiopian immigrants was that their demonstration enjoyed wide support across the country.

(Alon Ron/Israel Sun)

After 10 years, Ethiopian Jews raise their voice

Haim Shapiro traces the immigrants' trek from a quiet sit-in to this most Israeli of protests

Then, what I saw was old men and women, wrapped in their white embroidered shawls, sitting patiently and waiting; now, there were young people, shaking their fists and shouting.

The Ethiopian-Jewish demonstration this week at the Prime Minister's Office, following the disclosure that blood donated by members of the community had been discarded because of fear that it might be contaminated with the HIV virus, brought back poignant memories of another just over 10 years ago.

At that time, members of the community held a sit-in opposite Jerusalem's Heichal Shlomo, the seat of the Chief Rabbinate, to protest the chief rabbi's order that Ethiopian Jews undergo a symbolic conversion ceremony before they could marry.

In what appeared to be an almost mystical quest, Ethiopian Jews made their way to Jerusalem. Some of them were veterans of the long, dangerous trek from Ethiopia to Sudan, from which they were airlifted here.

They came on foot to Jerusalem. Bundled against the Jerusalem night chill in an upmarket neighborhood, they appeared to be strangers from another era.

At night, they held long meetings in Ambaric, at which everyone seemed to have a say. And night after night they decided to continue the protest.

The demonstration this week was short and forceful. Thousands came from all over the country on chartered buses. They shouted and threw stones, and police responded with tear gas and a

water cannon. About 70 demonstrators and police were injured. In 1985, it was difficult to find anyone other than the group's spokesman who spoke Hebrew. Even when individual demonstrators did speak Hebrew, their accent made them difficult to understand.

This time, thousands of demonstrators shouted their anger and frustration in excellent, colloquial Hebrew. One was Adi Menashe, 28, of Kfar Sava. For him, the violence was not surprising.

"I'd like to see what would happen if this accusation was made against any other community," he said, referring to the identification of the Ethiopian Jews as a high-risk AIDS group.

MENASHE immigrated in 1980, attended a state-religious school and served in an elite IDF unit.

"I did things [in the demonstration] that many Israelis wouldn't have done," he said.

The violence shocked police, who were not prepared for it, and the general public, which had viewed Ethiopian Jews as peaceful, even passive. Indeed, such violence would have been unthinkable in 1985, when the chief rabbi Avraham Shapira and Mordechai Eliahu visited the demonstrators to urge them to stop their protest.

The police were also not prepared for the sheer number of demonstrators. In 1985, there seemed to be plenty of room for all the protesters to stretch out at night. This week, they were crowded into a small space across the street from the Prime

(Continued on Page 14)

The fire next time may be hotter

Ethiopian Jews' growing indignation may explode if their grievances are not redressed, Allison Kaplan Sommer reports

THE emotional intensity and violence of the Ethiopian immigrant population not only took the police standing guard at their demonstration last Sunday by surprise, it shocked all of Israeli society. Throughout the week, the radio airwaves were buzzing with the public's incredulity at the level of anger and bitterness that erupted when Ethiopian Israelis learned that their blood was not considered fit to be used for donations.

An ethnic group that has been stereotyped as docile, accepting and eternally grateful for its deliverance from Ethiopia to Israel had let out a scream of rage and pain that was impossible to ignore.

When the demonstrators cried, "Shame on you!" at the country's leaders on Sunday, it was for 12 years of discrimination and humiliation. As Ethiopian leader Addisu Messala put it when addressing the Knesset's Absorption Committee, it was as if the community's pride and dignity had been thrown in the garbage along with its donated blood.

From the leaders of the Ethiopian community and those who know the community, it is clear that the issue of blood donations is only the tip of an iceberg when it came to its grievances. And it is even clearer that if nothing is done to seriously resolve the problems more eruptions are inevitable.

"If this event is a flash in the pan, and the real problems aren't addressed - and they don't begin and end with the issue of blood - then I think there will be a disaster," says Micha Odenheimer, director of the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews. "The next time, the anger will be even greater. I am hopeful that this is going to be a turning point."

"One of the bright spots this week is that the Israeli public has shown a great deal of sympathy toward the Ethiopians. Even the policemen who were injured in the demonstration came out and said they were behind the community."

WHILE ODENHEIMER is buoyed by the wave of public sympathy, he is less cheerful

about whether the government's response can match it. "I'm a little bit concerned, because what I see going on is politics as usual."

Young Ethiopians themselves are much more blunt about their cynicism about the new committee being set up in response to the demonstrations. The committee has been charged by Prime Minister Shimon Peres, not only with addressing the issue of the blood donations, but "all of the issues that are causing pain" to the Ethiopians, and will be headed by former president Yitzhak Navon.

"Promises and lies, promises and lies," ratters Benny Mikonen, 30, a reserve IDF officer, when asked what he expects from the committee.

Mikonen has enjoyed success since immigrating; he is well-educated, well-integrated, fluent in Hebrew. But two years ago, he had a political awakening.

"I walked into the rabbinate in Ashdod and said that I wanted to get married," he recalls. "Without asking any other questions about who I was, they immediately said that they would not marry Ethiopians. To say that to a Jew is taking away his identity. From the moment I heard them say that sentence, I have felt like I don't know what people I belong to. I don't feel like an Israeli anymore. They killed my feeling of belonging."

Since then, Mikonen has been active in the fight for recognition. He is a veteran of meetings with Knesset members, the chief rabbi and other leaders. He is skeptical of the community's traditional leadership, and expresses frustration that following initial protests in the 1980s, the elders of the community, the kessim, were co-opted when they were given government salaries, trading security for only partial recognition of the community's Jewishness.

HE TRUSTS no authority figure,

and says that young Ethiopians will be carefully watching which members of the community are appointed to the government committee. Even Messala, who has been the community's most visible spokesman over the past week, articulating their concerns accurately and emotionally, is not completely trusted, by young Ethiopians.

Messala's organization gets its budget from the Jewish Agency, the Absorption Ministry and Mikonen believes that the leader too is beholden to the government and too cozy with the Labor Party. In fact, Messala is running for a slot on the party Knesset election list.

"It's absurd to call his group an umbrella organization. Nobody elected him, the Israeli establishment picked him. It's comfortable to work with them." He says he fears political deals that will guarantee officials like Messala political advancement and leave the rest of the community where it started. But unlike in the 1980s, when the kessim were quieted, he says it won't work this time.

"Believe me, we, the young people, we are not stupid. We don't believe their promises. The young people, the soldiers who spilled their blood for this country, won't give up until we are first-class citizens."

Mikonen says he doesn't justify the violence that burst forth in the demonstration. "I am still angry, furious. The establishment has created a stigma, that is difficult to get rid of - the perception that all of us have AIDS. We go onto buses, people don't want to sit next to us. Soon we will have separate buses for blacks and whites."

"We live in separate neighborhoods, we go to separate schools. In South Africa and the US, governments are working to move away from discrimination and segregation, and we are moving

toward it."

GOVEZE ECHANASA, 38, head of the Movement for Ethiopian Jewry, says simply, that Israel is a "racist society."

He, too, is a veteran of many political battles. In 1984, he points out, when the key decisions regarding the education of Ethiopians were made, Yitzhak Navon was minister of education, and now he is being appointed to the committee that is supposed to correct the ills done to the Ethiopians.

"How are the same people who

decided on our fate, sent us to ghettos, to very weak boarding schools, who implemented a policy of deliberate discrimination that is driving our youth to desperation and crime supposed to find out what was wrong?" Echanasa asks.

Peres has directed the Navon committee to investigate how to improve the situation for Ethiopian Israelis in the future, not rehashing the mistakes of the past. But Echanasa warns, "we demand accountability. We want to know who made the decisions that our children were made to feel unequal, that sent them to schools in which there was no possibility we could send them to the universities, why we were forced by housing policies to go to the periphery to weak communities."

Messala has already served (Continued on Page 14)

The Association for Promoting Tourism in Israel

THE ECONOMIC FORUM

In conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism, together with the Association for Promoting Tourism in Israel, the Jerusalem Development Authority, the East Jerusalem Development Company, and the Jerusalem Hotel Association

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Prof. Eliezer Rachmilewitz
Chairman of Congress

Likud campaign strategy is up a creek

Next hurdle: The Covenant

Acute political distress has bred in the Likud a desperate need to do something, almost anything, to avert the looming electoral disaster.

As elections approach, Likud is scrambling to develop a winning strategy, Sarah Honig reports

Concerned about confused, ill-considered moves, someone in Meizudat Ze'ev recently likened his party to a swimmer who, caught in a treacherous undercurrent, begins making frantic, energy-consuming yet inefficient strokes to keep afloat.

Months, things will turn around with the help of some deus ex machina.

He concedes that "a crazy assassin's bullets have inflicted serious injuries upon the Likud, but that does not mean that a single event, unfortunate and damaging as it may be, should be allowed to alter a whole movement's credo — a credo which remains as right and as just as it was prior to the assassination."

Rabin's mantle appears to have been draped over Peres's image problems, resulting in a lead of about 20 percent for Peres.

Shamir's anxiety about the Likud's condition is not excessive. He is not alone in realizing that the slain Yitzhak Rabin will no doubt posthumously star in Labor's election campaign.

THE DIEHARDS, reason many Likud strategists, ultimately have no one better to support for prime minister than Netanyahu. He should therefore concentrate on wresting support from his opponent.

The Likud is indeed haunted by Rabin. For all its brave words about taking a beating but keeping on ticking, the national camp doesn't quite know how to do it.

But thus Netanyahu would be doing precisely what the purists — like Shamir and MK Benny Begin — caution against. They warn that he could just as easily transfer floating support to Peres by blurring distinctions in order to appear more moderate and pragmatic and thereby appeal to the political center.

Any faith there might have been in the healing power of time is fading fast. The three months which elapsed since the assassination did not radically improve the Likud's situation, though the polls do show its Knesset fight holding up well against Labor. But this is not so in the first-ever direct showdown for the premiership, where Likud chairman Binyamin Netanyahu continues to trail far behind incumbent Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

However, theirs is now clearly a minority opinion in the Likud. Netanyahu is increasingly counseled by those around him that, rather than be the constant naysayer, he should actually show what he stands for and produce a program, an amended platform, an alternative.

Rabin's mantle appears to have been draped effectively over Peres's chronic image problems, resulting in a steady lead of about 20 percent for Peres.

But this same advice was dispensed a couple of years ago, though few today remember the alternative blueprint Netanyahu produced then. As Labor learned from its stint in the opposition, when it churned out dozens of plans, they tend to be complex and fail to grip

the imagination. All of this will not keep Netanyahu from trying. He must do something, even at the risk of vexing those already converted, as he reaches out to those he may yet have a chance of converting.

What is at stake isn't an ideological change. Being in the opposition, we need to react to a given situation created by the present government and we need to explain how we would deal with the changed reality if we are returned to power, Netanyahu answers his critics and stresses that he will not send the IDF to reconquer the cities handed over to the PLO.

But these cities are not the only issue. There is territory which has not yet been ceded. We will contain the Palestinian Authority. Whereas we won't actively reverse what has already been done, we can keep a bad situation from getting worse by putting the brakes on reckless Israeli concessions to a side that views them as part of its scheme to eradicate the Jewish state in phases.

Those who paid attention to Netanyahu's earlier proposals will recognize that he is basically repeating his notion of autonomy in the major Arab population centers, which will be surrounded by areas of Israeli settlement, under Israeli control, to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state — all generally in keeping with the Camp David concept of autonomy.

As MK Tzahi Hanegbi, one of Netanyahu's closest cronies and Geula Cohen's son, insisted this week, "there is no real departure here from the Likud platform and certainly not from our ideology. What we have here are tactical adjustments to a new situation... Certainly, no one can accuse me of betraying our cause."

The reprinting of a second, only slightly revised edition of the position paper which generated no excitement two years ago, will doubtless, however, stir lots of passions on the Likud's right with elections in the offing.

Tsomet, Molelet and the NRP will gleefully depict Netanyahu as a heretic and claim new raison d'être for their separate political existence.

The same cheer is instilled in Meretz by Peres's courting of the undecided. He is lately emitting quite hawkish noises and has gone to the length of hiring the services of the most ultra-Orthodox Bnei Brak publicist.

Albeit in differing degrees of severity, the same problem plagues pragmatists of all persuasions. While Netanyahu tries to keep his nose above water and find a possible lifeline in the political center, so Peres, confident as he has the right to be at this juncture, nevertheless seeks to pad his seemingly sound raft with as many floating voter straws as he can pluck from the tide.

Even before Israel and the PLO examined the initial returns from the Palestinian elections, both sides turned their eyes to what may be the greatest stumbling block so far in their peace process: the Palestinian covenant.

The covenant, effectively the constitution of the PLO, is an important symbol of unity to Palestinians just as it has been a red flag for Israelis.

Even "opposition" groups, such as the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and George Habash's Popular Front, are signatories to the covenant and therefore constituent members of the PLO.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres said several times this week that it would be impossible for the PLO to continue to reap the benefits of peace without changing its constitution, which clearly advocates Israel's destruction. Otherwise, said Peres, Arafat would have to withdraw the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) from the PLO, effectively disbanding the organization.

Officials of the PNA have suggested that on the issue of the covenant, as on the issue of PNA activities in Jerusalem, the Israeli right is trapping the Peres government, perhaps leading to a Palestinian-Israeli crisis.

Salim Za'anan, the acting speaker of the Palestinian National Council (PNC), the PLO's parliament until the recent elections, hinted that by insisting that the covenant be amended within two months after the elections, Israel is really trying to put off unpopular measures such as withdrawal from Hebron.

What PNA officials do not say publicly to the Israeli media is that the covenant is very popular with Palestinians and that the new 88-member PNA legislative council will not easily change it. Arafat himself and his media organs have spent much of the last two years reiterating many of the themes found in the covenant. Can he really make such an about-face now?

Many of Arafat's major opponents reject changes in the covenant or link them to total Israeli capitulation on issues in the final status talks.

Dr. Haider Abdul-Shafi, the former head of the delegation to talks with Israel in Washington, has insisted that changes in the covenant be tied to dismantling Israeli settlements. He could lead opponents in a campaign against covenant change, using the issue to hurt Arafat.

Why, say PLO supporters, subject Arafat's leadership to such stress when the covenant is an old-fashioned document that has

not bound PLO policy makers such as Arafat anyway? After the Palestinian elections and the Palestinian-Israeli treaties, does it really matter what the Palestinians ratified in 1964? An answer to these and other questions can come only from a review of the document Palestinians lovingly call al-

MICHAEL WIDLANSKI

Mithaq (see box).

FOR MANY years, the Israel viewed the covenant as the ultimate proof of the undying PLO hostility.

Amendments in 1968 actually made it even more violently anti-Israel and anti-Jewish, by demanding the removal of all Jews who had arrived in Palestine not only after 1947 but even those who arrived after 1917, the date now called "the beginning of the Zionist invasion."

But in the 1980s, there were growing voices in Israel arguing that the covenant, while symbolically important to some Palestinians, was not really important to the PLO leadership itself.

In 1984, Yossi Beilin, then deputy foreign minister, forbade the previous practice of Israeli embassies of distributing copies of the covenant finding it to be irrelevant.

For example, Articles 9 and 21 reject political solutions, focusing only on military means. But some analysts note that the PNC's adoption in 1974 of the "strategy of stages" — being ready to accept less than all of Palestine, at least as a first stage — effectively blunted some of this ideology, at least tactically.

In the years before his death, Maj.-Gen. (Res.) Prof. Yehoshafat Harkabi, the man who had originally translated the covenant into Hebrew, said that the PLO's constitution had been overtaken by events.

Harkabi cited the PNC declarations of Algiers in 1988 suggesting PLO willingness to have a state side by side with Israel. Harkabi also cited the ongoing research on the PLO by his protégé, doctoral student Matti Steinberg, who found that the PLO had abandoned the ideology symbolized by its covenant while choosing instead a pragmatic course.

Steinberg went so far as to declare in a lecture in February, 1989, that Yasser Arafat had even abandoned the demand for "the right of return." I asked Steinberg about Arafat's alleged concession. He referred to an article in *Foreign Affairs* by Professor Walid Khalidi, a US-based Palestinian scholar, where the possible concession on the right of return was discussed.

"Khalidi would not have done that without Arafat's approval," asserted Steinberg.

This kind of lack of clarity also surrounds other supposed concessions made by Arafat including his declaring the covenant "caduc," a French word meaning old-fashioned, an act widely reported as Arafat's nullification of the covenant.

"Arafat could not invalidate the covenant any more than an American politician could make an announcement canceling the US constitution," remarked Dr. Rafafel Israeli, an expert at the Hebrew University who has studied PLO statements on the covenant.



Covenant's sticking points

The 23-clause Palestinian National Covenant, known as the Mithaq, is the most important document in the PLO's arsenal. It was adopted in 1964 and has since been revised several times. The current version, adopted in 1988, is the one that is most widely known. It is a document that has been the subject of much controversy and debate. The covenant is a document that is both a symbol of unity for Palestinians and a source of division. It is a document that has been the subject of much controversy and debate. The covenant is a document that is both a symbol of unity for Palestinians and a source of division. It is a document that has been the subject of much controversy and debate.

Storming Mahane Yehuda: Two for one and two for all

THE WEEK THAT WAS MICHAEL YUDELMAN

IT was a cunning military infiltration of an enemy stronghold, a daring sortie down treacherous alleyways of political hostility, yet there they were — Labor's generals in Likud's boot camp, Jerusalem's Mahaneh Yehuda market.

The stallholders certainly fell for the element of surprise as Housing Minister Binyamin (Fuad) Ben-Eliezer and Foreign Minister Ehud Barak dropped by on an apparently casual visit, a political odd couple, strolling side-by-side.

This market has been for Likudniks what Lourdes is for Catholics, a place of pilgrimage for true believers in times of trouble. Like election time.

Fuad said. Not surprisingly, at first Fuad and Barak were treated like aliens in *The X-Files* ("Intruder alert! Intruder alert!") — confused reactions, lots of astonishment and lots of defensive cries of "Bibi for prime minister."

But astonishment soon gave way to warmth — after all, where is a little hutzpa better appreciated than in the bazaar.

Out came the obligatory humors and pickles and soon the Laboring cheeks were wet with sweat and kisses, their lips red with strawberries.

"Labor has conquered Mahaneh Yehuda," the old warhorses declared with as much surprise as braggadocio as they squeezed kiwis and praised permissiveness.

image. Fuad is the answer. Here is the election staff of shoulder-thumping familiarity with the Sephardic community, a man who cannot stroll the sidewalk without being hailed by "the street." Fuad has no rival in this role and he has placed more people in jobs than any other minister.

Barak has wisely chosen to log into Fuad's legendary networking and organizational web.

Barak may have missed the point that he himself is being networked by Fuad, as he fights for a sunny spot on Labor's Knesset list. Might be useful to have a chap as a friend who might be the party's future leadership.

COUPLES The Fuad-Barak alliance is just one of the joint ventures which are becoming a fashion accessory for this election year.

expenses of renting venues, sending campaign mail to tens of thousands of constituents, organizing activities and oiling the public relations machine that feeds the media.

Labor's Yossi Beilin and Yael Dayan, for instance, sent a joint (read cheaper) mailing to party members of the United Kibbutz Movement and the Arab sector.

One of the first such joint ventures was hatched by Likud MKs Silvan Shalom, Tzahi Hanegbi and Limor Livnat, all vying for the Likud Top 10.

Ministers Shetreet, Moshe Shahal and Ya'acov Tzur formed a partnership aimed to be a defensive wall against the attractive new upstarts popping up all over the party.

feeling for forming a party, that the National Religious Party (last election slogan: to be always "on your right") started talking of a Zionist-religious front.

NRP leader MK Zevulun Hammer, after talks with Meimad leader Minister Yehuda Amital, said he sees no possibility of making common cause with the haredi or other right-wing parties. But he could see a religious-Zionist front.

Amital was pleased at this sign of the NRP returning to its more centrist roots.

Meimad will decide by the end of February whether to take the election plunge. Meanwhile, it has hired media-whiz Yariv Ben-Eliezer to run its campaign.



Barak (left) and Fuad (center) accept a blessing by Rav Zacharia at the beginning of their Mahane Yehuda stroll. (Brian Hessler)

those in the national-religious camp whose positions are so radical that they resemble Natorej Karta and those who use Halacha as a political ax.

Meir said Meimad does not reject a Palestinian state since such an entity is not a violation of any principle or edict of Torah or Halacha.

Peres, Preserve National Unity!

Most of the People Oppose Concessions on the Golan!

* According to a nation-wide survey conducted by the Mashik Company on January 14, 1996.

Citizens for Israel's Security in cooperation with the 8 Kaplan Street, Tel Aviv. Direct Phone: 03-6950037; Teleklal: 03-6388984

February 2, 1996
venant

Washington growing impatient with Peres

US officials complain that Israel keeps upping its demands, Steve Rodan reports

Next week, Warren Christopher arrives in the Middle East for his 17th visit as US secretary of state; he has traveled to this region more times than to such powers as Russia, China or Britain.

As he did 16 times before, Christopher will start his trip in Israel, listen to the assessments of Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister Ehud Barak and sound them out for what they hope to hear from Syria during his current shuttle. Then, he will fly to Damascus and sit for hours with Syrian President Hafez Assad and listen to his positions and determine his willingness to meet the Israeli positions.

It's a job that requires unlimited patience and an ability to cut through rhetoric and determine the real positions of Israel and Syria - essentially the kind of work Christopher, an attorney by training, is cut out for. But even for Christopher, 17 times might be too much.

"He feels a certain impatience," says Martin Indyk, the US ambassador to Israel. "He wants the pace of the negotiations accelerated."

Although none of them has done so publicly, US officials are grumbling these days. They complain that the Clinton administration is working at a furious pace to bring Israel and Syria to a model peace while the Peres government is being sidetracked by election fever.

Suddenly, the US officials say, their Israeli counterparts have been upping the price for an accord with Syria. The late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin made it clear that what mattered to him was security arrangements on the Golan Heights. Peres wants that, plus normalization between Damascus and Jerusalem as well as a comprehensive peace with virtually the entire Arab world.

Indyk, during an address to Bar-Ilan University's BESA Center for Strategic Studies on Wednesday, disclosed that a week before his death, Rabin had agreed that the US would "broker" an accord on security arrangements on the Golan Heights during the first quarter of 1996, after the passage of the state budget through the Knesset. This agreement included the US presentation of a so-called "non-paper" that would spell out the principles and aims of security arrangements between Israel and Syria. Rabin's death placed the US plans on

hold and Peres has diverted the Syrian-Israeli talks into other areas, primarily economic cooperation. Indeed, both US and Israeli diplomatic sources say Peres has decided that he wants the Israeli-Syrian peace to be at least as warm as that with Jordan.

"If we would be satisfied with an Egyptian-type peace, we could have already concluded something with Syria," an Israeli diplomat says.

US officials have mixed feelings toward Peres. They acknowledge that Peres has been the driving force behind the agreements with both Jordan and the PLO. His dynamism has moved the international community to support his vision of a new Middle East.

On the other hand, the officials say, Peres is far more complex than Rabin and thus it is more difficult to pin down exactly what his position is.

"Rabin will say no and we know he means it," a US diplomatic source says. "Peres will say yes and we'll find out later that what he actually meant was 'yes, but...'"

Still, Clinton, who admires Peres's bold ideas on changing this region, has agreed to the prime minister's new approach. US officials say Christopher has brought what they say is Assad's consent to normalization and comprehensive Arab peace with Israel, and Peres's aides - if not Peres himself - still seem unsatisfied.

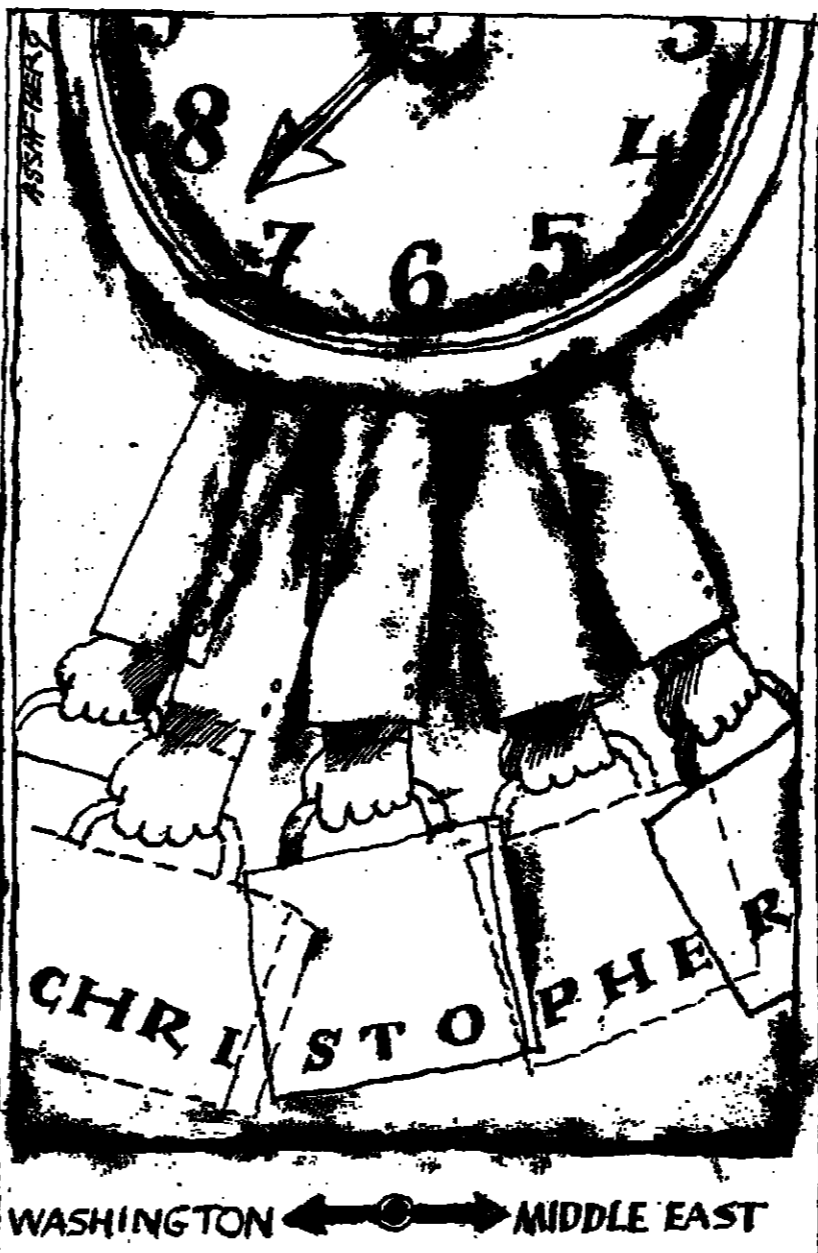
"There is this concept of pocketing things, saying it's absolutely essential and then when you get it saying it's not so important anymore," a US official says.

The bottom line is that Israel is looking for Assad to make more and more gestures to convince Israelis that the Golan Heights is worth giving up. US officials say the goal is so ill-defined it is virtually impossible to fulfill.

"Here, I think we're constantly moving the goalposts," one official says.

Over the past two weeks, Christopher and his aides have argued that Syria has gone a long way toward meeting Israeli demands. They say the Syrian president has cracked down on Hizbullah attacks in south Lebanon at the cost of strained relations with Iran. He has also agreed to give Israel a free hand in forming relations with any country in the Arab world.

Suddenly, the US officials say, Peres's aides, including senior ministers, are playing it cool.



"Now the skeptics say what's the big deal in having relations with 20 Arab states," the official says. "That's what I mean by moving goalposts."

Some officials are beginning to question the wisdom of what is perhaps the most spectacular card in the Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations - a summit sponsored by US President Bill Clinton, who would invite Assad and Peres along with numerous other Arab leaders to a ceremony to formally end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Assad, the officials say, has agreed to such a meeting after he is assured that

his demands for full withdrawal from the Golan would be met.

The question is when such a meeting should take place. US officials are concerned that unless it is held on the eve of Israeli elections or a referendum on the Golan, the euphoria generated by such a summit would soon dissipate.

"By the time the summit is over, there would be those saying it's no longer a big deal," a US official says.

ISRAELI OFFICIALS respond that behind the muted complaints of Christopher's peace team is a serious

disagreement over what Assad has actually committed himself to. The argument began in January 1994, after Clinton's meeting with Assad in Geneva. The head of the US State Department's peace team, Dennis Ross, asserted that Assad had agreed to full peace and normalization.

Rabin and his aides disagreed. Then-IDF chief of military intelligence Maj.-Gen. Uri Saguy dissected the transcript of the Assad-Clinton meeting and argued that the Syrian president was merely reshaping old positions and statements.

Today, Israeli officials close to Peres maintain that since then, Assad has hardly budged from his position. They say the Syrian president's so-called consent to normalization is so vague that it can mean anything.

They say that the US and Israel agreed that they would obtain a two-page accord on principles of a peace agreement with Syria. So far, Assad has agreed to no more than a sentence.

"As far as we can see, the only thing he's agreed to is that we can fly our flag in Damascus," a senior aide to Peres says. "That is being presented as normalization."

Other senior officials go further. They say the rosy US assessment of Assad's position is meant to convince Peres to say clearly what both he and Rabin have been strongly suggesting for the last three and a half years: that Israel will withdraw fully from the Golan Heights. Israeli diplomatic sources say Peres told the Clinton administration that he would decide on such a step after the next Christopher shuttle.

"The pressure is on us to say that we will withdraw to the June 4, 1967, borders," one senior official says. "We're not going to do that. We just can't sell such an agreement to the public."

The reason, officials say, is that this would be seen as capitulation. It would wreck Israel's demands for water rights of the tributaries to the Kinneret as well as to the lake itself. It would mean renewing the bitter disputes with Syria over the control of the eastern shore of the Kinneret as well as legitimizing Damascus's capture of territory from Israel.

US officials disagree. They say Israel can agree to full withdrawal while the US would help ensure that its water needs would be met. Moreover, an announcement of full withdrawal need not be specific, thus leading to a compromise between Israel's unofficial consent to pull back to what it regards as the international border and Syria's demand for an evacuation to the June 4 line.

Aides to Peres say the prime minister has quietly toughened his position over

the past few weeks. They say he is playing a game of brinkmanship, giving Assad several more weeks to either change his position or convene Peres's long-awaited Arab summit with Israel. The alternative would be early Israeli elections in May or June that would delay important Israeli decisions on the peace talks until perhaps next year.

Already, the aides say, Peres faces a veritable opposition to an Israeli withdrawal to the June 4, 1967, line. This includes the entire IDF brass, Minister Yossi Beilin and Foreign Minister Ehud Barak.

Barak's agreement to a Syrian deal is vital, the aides say, to convince Israelis that national security has been maintained. But Barak remains opposed to a full withdrawal.

"He hasn't changed his position one iota since he was chief of staff," an official says.

One senior official says Syrian rejection of an Israeli offer for a withdrawal to the international border has pushed Peres to support early national elections. This despite Peres's refrain that his deliberations over early elections have nothing to do with the current talks with Syria.

"If Shimon agreed to move up the elections, it means nothing is happening," the official said.

Such a prospect would certainly dishearten Christopher. He had planned for intensive negotiations over the next six months that would culminate in an announcement of an agreement by July. This would leave enough time for Israel and the US to conduct their elections in the fall.

As Israeli diplomatic sources see it, Christopher plans to retire after the US elections. He has been hoping that he could follow up his success in achieving peace in Bosnia with one that would end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But if Christopher can't achieve this, he will do no more than grumble. US officials say the Clinton administration will smother Israel with affection and aid, but will not apply pressure.

Indeed, Barak says that Clinton told him during the foreign minister's trip to Washington last week that the substance of the negotiations rather than its timetable is the key to a successful peace effort.

As a result, US officials say they won't force any of their ideas on either Israel or Syria. Any proposals meant to bridge the gap between the two sides will wait until both Israel and Syria want it.

"Our role is that of a facilitator," Indyk says. "We are not an imposer of anything. We will work with Israel, not against it."

Negotiating with Syria - a historical perspective

Syria was the last of Israel's neighbors to sign an Armistice Agreement with Israel. The July 20, 1949, agreement that ended the War of Independence was a non-aggression pact aimed at "facilitating the transition from the present truce to permanent peace in Palestine."

This "transition" has taken over 47 years and permanent peace between Israel and Syria has yet to be achieved. There are lessons to be learned today from the attempt to move toward that aim in 1951-53.

The main difficulty in negotiating the AA was the fate of the areas within the borders allotted to the Jewish state by the UN that had been occupied by the Syrians during the war. Under the agreement, the Syrians withdrew their forces from these areas, which were made into demilitarized zones.

Israel understood itself to be the sovereign in the DMZs, while Syria saw the status of those areas as yet to be determined.

The UN sided with the Syrian position and held that the chairman of the UN's Mixed Armistice Commission (MAC) could veto any Israeli activity in the areas. Not surprisingly, the DMZs proved to be a constant source of conflict between the parties.

Earlier, the Syrians had tried to get Israel to sign a peace treaty based on the cease-fire lines. In May 1949, Col. Hsnai Zaim, the Syrian dictator, sought to meet prime minister David Ben-Gurion to reach a final settlement based on the ceasefire line (down the center of Lake Hula, the Kinneret and the Jordan River). He offered to resettle 320,000 Palestinian refugees in Syria. But to the chagrin of the US and the UN, Ben-Gurion would not meet with him unless Syria first committed itself in the armistice negotiations to withdraw to the international border.

Ben-Gurion's policy was that Israel must not rush, or permit itself to be rushed, into any peace settlement entailing far-reaching territorial or other concessions which could threaten Israel's security and long-term survival.

IN THE absence of a peace agreement, the AA became the means by which the Syrian-Israeli relationship was managed. In January 1951, tensions between Israel and Syria rose to new heights, when Israel started work on the Lake Hula drainage project.

Israeli-Syrian talks in the 1950s broke down when both sides felt they were giving up too much, Shaul Ramati writes

Shishakli demanded immediate stoppage of all work connected to the Hula drainage project. If we agreed, he would appoint an authorized person to discuss with us the situation of the DMZs by partition.

Shishakli's main interest was US support. He was not ready to move beyond the armistice agreement, but sought territorial gains, particularly a foothold on the waterline. The French, the US and Gen. William Riley, chief of the UNTSO, supported the Syrian aim, considering the waterline to be Israel's natural border with Syria. Today, Syrian President

for secret talks on a single border and economic relations. When Shishakli officially became dictator on November 29, 1951, we suggested he should meet with chief of staff Yigael Yadin to discuss matters outside the competence of the MAC. He asked for some delay due to intra-Arab politics. However, by January 1952, it was clear the meeting would not take place, as he felt it could not be kept secret and would embarrass him with the other Arab states.

Israel dropped its proposal for a high-level meeting and on July 6, 1952, Ben-Gurion appointed the delegation to the secret talks -



Shaul Ramati (left) and Syrian chief negotiator Hassan Jedid meet on a bridge to discuss their countries' differences.

Hafez Assad demands an Israeli withdrawal to the lines of June 4, 1967, which would give Syria a share of Lake Kinneret and fishing rights.

On June 11, 1951, during a recess in a MAC meeting, Col. Jedid told me bluntly that Syria would not agree to allow Israel to continue work on the Hula drainage project, unless Israel agreed that Syria advance to the waterline. I replied we were not ready for talks limited to the DMZs and the border. They would have to deal with all outstanding problems. We would discuss water rights only as part of a general discussion of economic relations.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson warned Israel not to "cast aside lightly" the Syrian proposal for negotiations. As a result, Israel proposed an agenda

including Gen. Moshe Dayan, Maj. Arieh Friedlander, Yosef Tekoah, deputy legal adviser of the Foreign Ministry, and myself. We were invested with full powers to conclude and sign on behalf of Israel any agreement that would improve relations with Syria. We informed the Syrians and a couple of weeks later they gave us the names of the Syrian delegates. Headed by Jedid, they included a senior Foreign Ministry official.

The secret meeting finally took place on October 9, 1952, in Rosh Pina. The Syrians only had credentials as MAC members and were limited to discussing matters deriving directly from the AA. Dayan expressed our willingness to discuss anything the Syrians wished but only in the framework of a political agreement which would signify progress toward

peace. In informal talks, it was agreed that the DMZs should be eliminated. The parties clarified their positions on the location of the demarcation line, territorial compensation, water and fishing rights. They also stipulated what was negotiable.

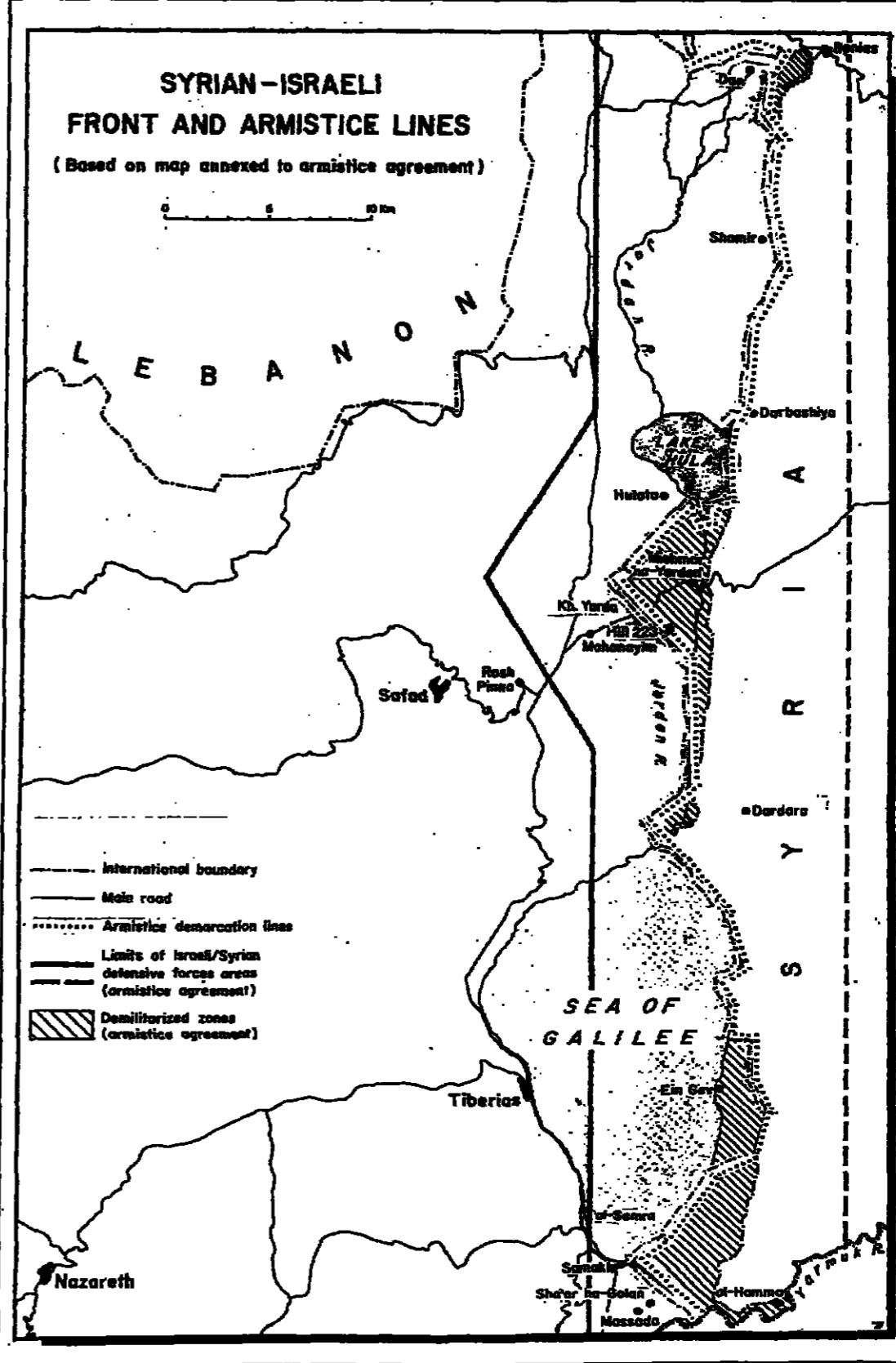
The next secret meeting was on January 15, 1953. Eight more followed, the last being on May 27, 1953. There were no official protocols and no agenda. This made it easier to reach informal agreements, but it meant positions changed from meeting to meeting. Only after the eighth meeting, on April 13, 1953, were some of the conditional understandings put down in writing.

In the central DMZ, the Syrians agreed to a cartographical demarcation line one meter east of Lake Hula and the Jordan River, down to where it flowed into Lake Tiberias, not establishing any water rights. Israel agreed to compensate all Arab landowners on a dunam-for-dunam basis with an 8x2-km. strip of non-demilitarized Israeli territory in the Durbashiya area. In all sectors, the Syrians would be permitted to pump the same amount of water from the Jordan River as they used in the driest month of 1953, plus another 10 percent.

In the northern sector, the line would be drawn in accordance with Jewish and Arab cultivation, as Israel had demanded. In the southern sector, the strip of non-demilitarized Israeli territory northeast of Lake Kinneret would be reduced from 10 to 1 meter. Otherwise, the agreed line basically followed the de-facto situation. There was no agreement on fishing rights, as Israel insisted on issuing licenses to the Arab fisherman, as the Mandatory government had done, to make clear its exclusive rights over the Kinneret. For the same reason, the Syrians insisted there was no need for licenses for them to exercise their natural right to fish. With regard to water, the Syrians agreed on the quantity to be used by them, but wanted no restrictions on Syrian pumping of water written into the agreement.

The official reason for breaking off the talks was that on May 29, Kibbutz Gonen had not given 48 hours notice that it was going to burn weeds near the border, as had been informally agreed on four days earlier. As a result, 10 acres of wheat burned down on the Syrian side.

The Syrians said there would be no meetings until compensation was paid. Israel did nothing about this until Gen. V. Ben-Nke, the successor to Riley, raised the matter of compensation on September 9, 1953. He received a positive



reply on the same day and compensation was paid in November. Into 1954, Israel suggested from time to time that the secret talks should be resumed. The Syrians, however, refused.

But the real reason why the secret talks were discontinued was that both sides felt that because of the dynamic of negotiations, they had given away too much for too little.

Minor territorial gains were outweighed for the Syrians by potential damage to their self-image as leader of uncompromising pan-Arabism. Israel realized it was weakening its claim to the international border by yielding to

Syria lands to the west of it, and endangering its water rights and sources, without any political advance from the armistice agreement toward peace.

Shaul Ramati is a former IDF spokesman and Israeli ambassador.

Freshmen and foreign aid: an iffy mix

Last summer, the US House of Representatives was preparing to vote on a bill which would tighten the economic embargo against Cuba and allow Americans to sue to regain their confiscated property there. It seemed a natural for attracting the conservative members' support.

However, the bill had to be modified for one reason: it called for US monetary assistance for the eventual transition to democratic rule.

The bill's opponents were freshmen Republican representatives who "wanted to be sure it wasn't a mandate to spend any more money on a new foreign aid program," according to an international relations committee staffer.

"I think it's a terrific illustration of the skepticism that exists among freshmen and the American people. The whole concept of foreign aid is in bad odor," he said.

Nevertheless, the House's 1995 foreign aid bills passed - with strong support from the freshmen. And as Congress reconvened last week, Israel's aid package was maintained with continued support from the Class of '94.

Therein lies the irony.

This much-heralded group of 73 Republicans rode into office following the November 1994 elections touting budgetary reform and fiscal responsibility to solve America's domestic ills. They wholeheartedly supported House Speaker Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America" that called for 10 legislative initiatives aimed at paring and ultimately balancing the federal budget.

Foreign aid was certainly not considered an issue the freshmen would support almost unanimously.

Yet about 90 percent of all freshmen - 13 rookie Democrats also were elected in 1994 - approved the foreign aid authorization bill in June and about 85 percent supported the appropriations bill in July.

Those numbers still leave pro-Israel observers uneasy about the stability of both foreign aid generally and Israel's current \$3 billion annual military and economic aid package.

A basic first reaction was a sigh of relief that, despite their budget-cutting fervor, the freshmen did not touch aid to the Middle East. Indeed, says freshman New York Republican Michael Forbes, a member of the House appropriations subcommittee that allocates foreign aid, "I have not heard one member of the freshman class make as their cause a cut to Israel and Egypt and Jordan."

But a more careful reading has left pro-Israel lobbyists concerned about the future.

They say the authorization bill's narrow 222-192 passage is merely indicative of a split along party lines, with just 11 of all the House's Democrats voting for it. (Most of the aid has not yet been transmitted to Israel due to unrelated partisan wrangling over abortion funding, though embassy officials think the matter will be concluded soon.)

That 72 of the 73 Republican freshmen supported the bill is not a testament to their favoring foreign aid or even aid to Israel, the pro-Israel forces say, but a commitment to slash foreign aid since the \$12.1 billion bill was a

Israel's share of America's aid package appears safe - for now. Hillel Kuttler reports from Washington

whopping \$1.5 billion below the previous year's allocation. While Israeli officials and



Forbes: No one wants to cut aid to Israel, Jordan, Egypt.



Weller: We realize the importance of foreign aid.

House sources see the peace process as staving off cuts to Middle East recipients this year, overall foreign aid will likely be sliced still more. "On the one hand, we got them to support it; on the other hand they could justify it by saying, 'We cut,'" an Israel supporter said of the 1996 foreign aid bills. "By and large, most of them [freshmen] are 'pro-Israel.' But I don't sense the overwhelming historical support some others have.... Having said that, I don't want to minimize the fact that many of them consider themselves pro-Israel, and strongly pro-Israel."

REPRESENTATIVE Benjamin Gilman, a New York Republican who chairs the House international relations committee, has said that the new demography on Capitol Hill - half of Congress's 535 seats turned over in just the last five years - dramatically illustrates the importance of educating members on the importance of supporting the foreign aid program and the US-Israel

relationship.

Officials of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee say their grass-roots members conducted over 1,000 meetings last year with representatives and senators, and that "with this many new members you obviously have to focus on them."

ALPAC sponsored a trip to Israel last August for 11 freshmen and has another one planned.

Jerry Weller, a freshman from the Chicago area who participated in the trip, said that the freshman class has "demonstrated an ability to hold firm" on its commitment to push for a balanced federal budget and to institute campaign finance and other reforms, while recognizing America's global responsibilities.

But "while we're reducing the deficit, we also realize the role that foreign aid can play in promoting US interests," he said.

In 70 town forums which Weller has conducted in his district, constituents are "much more receptive to foreign aid when they realize it's a tiny portion of our budget."

In their nearly single-minded focus on deficit reduction, freshmen have not often made their voices heard on foreign policy debates.

They did nearly prevent President Clinton's \$20 billion bailout of Mexico last year and strongly opposed his effort to deploy US peacekeeping troops to Bosnia.

A House staffer said that the domestic agenda aside, the elimination of the Europe-Middle East subcommittee helps account for why almost no freshmen have affected Middle East policy yet.

Forbes is one of the few newcomers who has tried. Late last year he led the charge to severely tighten the conditions for continued US-PLO relations.

Forbes's measure failed. He says he is surprised he did not receive greater support for holding the PLO to its obligations under the Oslo accord.

In Congress's budget-cutting mode, there is likely to be "a constant examination of foreign aid" programs, Forbes said, but with the US having a strong stake in a stable Middle East, neither freshmen nor Republicans as a bloc would slash aid to Israel.

"I think there are two issues here: overall foreign aid, yes. I think most Americans will say we need to continue to reexamine foreign aid," Forbes said.

"But I think there is great support now for not jeopardizing security in the Middle East by going in there and throwing out the baby with the bathwater. I would oppose reducing foreign aid to Israel at this juncture. The timing would be wrong, the message would be bad."

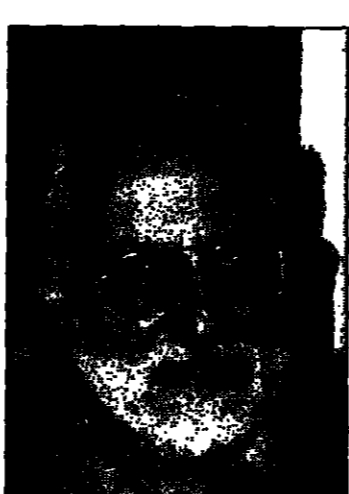
Educating members about the importance of sustaining the US-Israel relationship, and aid to Israel specifically, is "very helpful" so that newcomers and veterans alike "know this isn't just some other foreign affairs issue," Forbes added, echoing Gilman's call.

Four-term congressman Bill Paxton of Buffalo, N.Y. who chairs the informal House Republican Israel Caucus and who accompanied the Republican freshmen to Israel in August, said the House's newest members would most likely continue to support foreign aid to Israel out of a sense of its strategic value and religious connection.

Coincidentally, this was just when Ha-Kehila lost its previous editor, and the vacant position was tailor-made for Zweig, who also continues to freelance beyond the Jewish community. Ha-Kehila has one of the largest distribution ratios in the



Jewish media, a last link with heritage



GREER FAY CASHMAN

"There are people to whom this publication is the only connection to the community," declares Mindele Zweig, as she holds up the latest edition of Ha-Kehila, a 64-page magazine which she has been editing for the past 11 years.

One of over 150 journalists from 30 countries who gathered this week in Jerusalem for the Sixth International Conference of Jewish Media, Zweig, 57, a third-generation Finn, belongs to one of the smaller Jewish communities in the world.

Altogether, there are 1,100 Jews in Finland, she says, 900 of them in Helsinki.

Before Zweig took over, Ha-Kehila, which comes out six times a year, was more in the nature of a brochure. Operating as a one-woman team, Zweig turned the "brochure" into a real journal.

She fills it with local and Israeli news, reviews of new Jewish literature and features written mostly by some of the estimated 200 former Finns now living here. She herself was one for 10 years, working out of Tel Aviv as a freelancer for various Finnish publications.

When she returned to Helsinki with her troubadour husband, Andrea, who also serves as cantor in the synagogue, and son Gershon (who returned to Israel last year to serve in the IDF), she decided to become involved in the community.

Coincidentally, this was just when Ha-Kehila lost its previous editor, and the vacant position was tailor-made for Zweig, who also continues to freelance beyond the Jewish community. Ha-Kehila has one of the largest distribution ratios in the



Representatives of the Sixth International Conference of Jewish Media included Mindele Zweig (upper left), editor of Helsinki's 'Ha-Kehila,' and New Yorker Yehuda Lev (lower left), whose stint at 'Stars and Stripes' turned him into a 'practical Zionist.' (Sammy Avnion)

world. The print run is 800 copies which are sent free of charge to every household in the community. Non-Jewish subscribers who are friends of Israel pay only for the postage costs.

The publication's annual budget is \$90,000. Finnish marks (about NIS, 60,000). Forty percent of this sum is a government grant, made available to all religious publications, and the community funds the remaining 60 percent.

"If we had more money," sighs Zweig, "we would come out more frequently." A four-member editorial board, including Zweig, decides on direction, but Zweig herself determines actual content.

"I've been criticized for putting too much Israel into it," she admits, adding that the ideal balance would be a 25-percent Israel orientation. The bulk of the Israel content comes via the World Zionist Organization news and features department.

The current issue devotes much space to Rabbi Michael Alony, an Orthodox rabbi, who six months ago came from Dublin to stir up the Jewish community.

Prior to his arrival the Jews of Finland had been without a spiritual leader for eight years.

Although Finnish Jews are very much assimilated, the community center complex which contains Ha-Kehila's office also houses the synagogue, a ritual bath, a Jewish kindergarten, a Jewish primary school with 19 children, a Jewish hospital and retirement home, a Jewish library and a kosher deli. The complex is in the heart of Helsinki and the Jewish

cemetery is also close by.

Assimilation is rife, says Zweig, and there are mixed marriages in over 95 percent of the families. When Zweig herself was growing up, most of the non-Jewish partners in mixed marriages involving Jews converted.

Today, the tendency is just to make the children Jewish.

YEHUDA LEV, 69, is one of the longtime veterans of Jewish journalism, for which he first got a taste at the end of the Second World War when he was sent as an 18-year-old soldier to Europe. Large numbers of troops were being shipped home and jobs in the army were going begging. The young native New Yorker, who as a kid had appeared on radio, was looking for something to do in communications. There were vacancies in both Stars and Stripes, the publication of the US Armed Forces and in AFN, the armed forces radio network.

Lev, whose name was then John Low, grabbed them both. He provided occasional back-up for the Stars and Stripes writer covering the Nuremberg Trials, not realizing at the time that he would one day cover an equally dramatic war-crimes trial in Jerusalem. "I think I'm one of the few people who covered both the Nuremberg and the Eichmann trials," he says.

In gathering stories for Stars and Stripes, Lev became particularly interested in writing about Jewish displaced persons. He was encouraged in this regard by Rabbi Joseph Miller who was a chaplain in Frankfurt, and now lives in Netanya.

He turned me into a practical Zionist, reminisces Lev, who after his discharge from the army signed up with the Hagana, and came here illegally in March 1948.

After a two-year stint in the Negev as a soldier and a kibbutznik, he found himself in Jerusalem in 1950 as a member of the English section of Kol Zion Lagola which was headed by Geoffrey Wigoder.

Lev could never quite get the hang of Hebrew, and figured that if he wanted to get a university degree, he would have to go back to America. He spent four years studying political science at the University of Chicago and supported himself by working as an information officer at the Israel Consulate.

From 1955 to 1967, he worked as a stringer for several radio networks, including Israel Radio.

Returning to Jerusalem in 1956, he took up his old buddies and was promptly recruited to help set up a radio program for Canadian soldiers stationed in Gaza.

Lev was given an hour of broadcast time each day, presenting news, commercials and spontaneous patter. "The janitor walked in one day and didn't know he was in a live studio. We just shmoozed on air," recalls Lev, laughing heartily at the memory.

English teachers were not

happy about having Lev on the air. They didn't like his accent; they shuddered at his pronunciation; and they found his American jargon intolerable.

Nonetheless, the show was popular, and, when Lev's first child, Daniel, now a professor of nuclear physics at Washington University, was born at Hadassah Hospital 37 years ago, Lev flippanly invited listeners to his program to the *bris* - "and many of them came."

He had so much autonomy that he could do almost anything he wanted. But he saw that there was no future for him in Israel Radio, so he again crossed the Atlantic in 1965, this time on a grant to Stanford University.

In 1967, he went to Los Angeles, and while working for the community, started his own newsletter, a majority of one, which he put out on a battered manual typewriter on which he pounded a two-fingered tattoo. He managed to attain 800 subscribers.

From 1985 to 1983, he served as associate editor of the Jewish Journal of Los Angeles. The manual typewriter had been replaced by an electric one which in turn had been replaced by a keyboard for a computer terminal. His youngest daughter taught him to master the computer, "but I still type with two fingers."

Since reaching retirement age, Lev has been a regular contributor to The Jewish Voice of Rhode Island, a monthly publication, with a 2,700 circulation. The paper is putting out a special Jerusalem 3000 edition which will be almost entirely written by Lev, who is running around interviewing people from Rhode Island who are permanently or temporarily situated in Israel.

When all is said and done in Jewish journalism, the stories that receive the greatest attention are the home-town stories in which readers can easily identify with the subjects.

That doesn't mean that developments on the peace front, the Israeli election campaign, incidents of terrorism or articles about tourism are relegated to the back of the book; but they do compete with the people from home who are doing something in the Holy Land.

Both Lev and Zweig have witnessed changes in the media, which has ceased to become a rubber stamp for Israeli policy and allows itself to be critical.

So what is the most important story today?

The headline, both for Finland and Rhode Island, is not much different than it was 50 years ago - Jewish continuity.

Sometimes the headline is dramatic with assimilation statistics: sometimes it refers to sheer physical survival.

But the message that comes across loud and clear is that for those people who don't take advantage of Jewish education and who are disinclined to lead a religious lifestyle, the Jewish media is possibly the last link with Jewish heritage.

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Mythology is history in AP's chronology

EYE ON THE MEDIA
DAVID BAR-ILLAN

If history is, as one wag put it, "mythology told by the winners," then the winners of the Arab-Israeli conflict are the Palestinians. It is their version of history which is accepted as gospel truth, in everything from textbooks and encyclopedias to the chronologies of the Arab-Israeli conflict released by wire services.

The most recent such listing was published by AP on the occasion of the Palestinian elections on January 20. Named "Palestinian events," it begins the chronology on May 15, 1948, the date on which "State of Israel proclaimed. First Arab-Israeli war starts. Some 700,000 Palestinians flee or are driven from former British-mandate Palestine. Israel seizes about half the land intended for a new Arab state, Jordan and Egypt seize the rest. Jerusalem divided between Israel and Jordan."

Not a word indicating that the UN General Assembly recommendation which delineated "the land intended for a new Arab state" was rejected out of hand by all Arabs, or that the Arab-Israeli war did not just "start" — it was a combination of Arab terrorist attacks against Jews inside the mandate area and an invasion by six Arab armies with the express purpose of annihilating the nascent Jewish state.

The number 700,000 usually cited for the Arab refugees (not "Palestinian refugees" — the only people known as "Palestinians" at the time were the Jews of this country), is a bit of fiction which even Israelis now mindlessly par-

rot. There simply could not have been 700,000 refugees from the areas under Israeli control because there never were more than 550,000 Arabs in them, and 150,000 stayed put within Israel's boundaries. This means that the true number of refugees was at most 400,000. The higher figure originated in an UN Relief and Works Agency report on the number registered in its camps, many of whom entered the camps because they offered free food and housing.

Under different circumstances, AP's ability to include so many myths in one paragraph would have been amusing. But the fact is that this mythology has become accepted history, which avers that Israel was the aggressor in 1948, and that it seized part of a "Palestinian" state in a war of aggression which displaced 700,000.

This impression is reinforced in the paragraph describing the Six Day War. Again, there is no mention of what triggered the war, just that "Israel captures the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, the Sinai and the Golan, causing another 300,000 Palestinians to flee."

The next item is about the Camp David agreement on autonomy for the Palestinians, followed by the eruption of the intifada in 1987 in which "more than 1,100 Palestinians and 150 Israelis are killed." The death of over 1,000 additional Palestinians by Palestinians is ignored. In fact,

throughout the chronology there is no mention of Palestinian terrorism, against either Jews or Arabs, before the Oslo agreement or after.

The next items are particularly puzzling. On November 15, 1988 Arafat "declared an independent Palestinian state, roughly encompassing West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem." This is a misleading fabrication. Arafat never defined the borders of the Palestinian State. He could have never had the Palestine National Council pass the declaration if he had.

On December 12, 1988, the chronology continues, "Arafat accepts Israel's right to exist and renounces terrorism, leading to US dialogue with the PLO, severed in 1989." Neither in 1988 nor since then has Arafat ever recognized Israel's right to exist. He claims that by accepting UN resolutions 242 and 338 — which, without mentioning Israel, call for all the nations in the region to live within secure borders — he in effect recognized Israel. But admitting the fact of Israel's existence is not the same as recognizing its right to exist.

Even more puzzling is the statement that Arafat "renounced terrorism." Since there is never a mention of a single act of terrorism in the whole chronology of Palestinian history, one can only wonder why Arafat felt the need to renounce it. Nor does AP mention

why the US dialogue with the PLO was severed in 1989. It might have been embarrassing to recall that after renouncing terrorism, the PLO launched an attack on Israel's beaches, which was stopped before the terrorists managed to execute the second part of their plan: an assault on the US Embassy in Tel Aviv.

Compared to these whoppers, the semantic slants and silly errors which follow seem relatively harmless. On June 23, 1992, Yitzhak Rabin ends "15 years of right-wing government." For six of those 15 years the government was a national unity government in which Labor was an equal partner. But even for the nine years of Likud dominance the use of "right-wing" sounds biased — not because the Likud is not right wing, but because no news agency ever refers to the Labor-Meretz government as "left wing."

Just as inaccurate is the statement that on July 1, 1994, "Arafat returns to his homeland after a 25-year exile." This may be a fitting PLO propaganda line, but Arafat was never born in Palestine nor ever lived there. He was born in Cairo, and while he may have visited the territories, he never spent any time in them. (The "25-year exile" is particularly strange. Was he supposed to have lived under Israeli "occupation" until 1969?)

The last item refers to the January 20 election day, on which the Palestinians elect a "president and 88-seat legislative council." In calling the council a legislature, the AP may be ultimately correct, but the Israel-PLO agreement carefully avoids calling it that.

Of the 16 items in the chronology, only seven are error-free. But it is most unlikely that AP will correct the mistakes. Major media organizations simply refuse to admit error, particularly when the mistake is detrimental to Israel.

IN A letter to complaining reader Lillian Freudmann, *New York Times* executive editor Joseph Lelyveld writes, "We sometimes make mistakes, and when they're pointed out to us, correct them promptly." But in fact no paper is more reluctant to correct even the most glaring factual errors on Israel than the *Times*. It has yet to correct the statement by its Jerusalem correspondent, Serge Schmemmann, for example, that Gaza absorbed 250,000 Palestinian refugees from Kuwait.

ABC World News Tonight is worse yet. Even when its anchor Peter Jennings is forced to make a correction, he gives it an anti-Israel slant. On January 22, Jennings, having been caught faking film footage on October 4, had this to say: "And we have a cor-

rection to make tonight. In a story some time ago about Palestinian prisoners, our reporter said that this house [video of bulldozers knocking down Mohammed Wahidi's home] was destroyed by the Israelis as a matter of government policy. In this case, it was destroyed during what the Israeli authorities said was a raid on suspected terrorists. There were no terrorists in the house, and the Israeli government paid to rebuild it. And we regret the error."

THE LONDON *Daily Mail* recently joined the pack. Describing the Rabin funeral, this is what its Jerusalem correspondent, Geoffrey Levy, wrote:

"...Rabin's granddaughter looked up at the former enemy king's face in time to see its blood-shot irony as he recalled that he too had lost a grandfather in similar circumstances in this very city when he was a child."

"He did not offer the details publicly on this occasion. That would not have been diplomatic. But Israelis know that in 1953, King Hussein's grandfather was shot dead at a mosque by a Jewish extremist just as Rabin was shot dead by one in Tel Aviv on Saturday."

London media watcher Ruth Willers immediately wrote the paper, demanding a correction:

"King Abdullah of Jordan was murdered on July 20, 1951, on the steps to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem by Shukri Ashu, an assassin hired by Dr. Musa al

Husseini [a kinsman of Haj Amin al-Husseini and Faisal Husseini]. Ashu was a Palestinian Arab and was himself shot dead by the king's bodyguards."

"At a time that is charged with emotions as the present, such a display of ignorance by your correspondent not only serves to heighten existing tensions but also to adversely affect the credibility of your paper."

It took the *Daily Mail* a month to respond:

"You are of course absolutely right. Our reporter got his facts wrong and you were among a number of diligent readers who took the trouble to contact us.... Please rest assured that we are extremely grateful to you for doing this. We need our readers to keep us up to the mark and our cuttings files have been amended and the author suitably chastised for his shortcomings and failure to double check his facts...."

"I like to think that we are also prepared to admit our mistakes and this piece article [sic] certainly carried two howlers."

"I do hope that you have not lost all faith in our ability to admit the error of our ways and that you will accept my apology for our bad manners on this occasion."

"Lawrence Sear
"Managing Editor"

The only trouble, of course, is that this profuse mea culpa was confined to a personal letter. The paper never published a correction of this inexcusable distortion of history.

Of celebrating the king and escorting the queen

The value of culture is its effect on character. It awails nothing unless it enables and strengthens that. Its use is for life. Its aim is not beauty but goodness.

(W. Somerset Maugham)

THEY ARE calling it "King David's Banquet."

They describe it as "the onetime royal feast, to be prepared in Jerusalem by the world's greatest chefs," and predict that it will be "the royal gastronomic happening of the century."

It is to consist of "12 kosher delicacy courses that will go down in culinary history."

The feast is to be served in the Teddy Hall of the National Convention Centre (Binyenei Ha'uma) on Monday evening, March 18 — a date signifying nothing special I'm aware of on the Gregorian or Jewish calendar.

You can be one of the 500 participants in this "royal" *fress* by reserving a place on payment of \$600 or NIS 1,800 (installments possible) to a certain commercial purveyor of "culture."

All this by way of celebrating "Jerusalem 3000."

The feast bears David's name because it was he who about 3,000 years ago established Jerusalem as capital of the United Kingdom of Israel after reigning for seven years in Hebron over the tribe of Judah (II Samuel 5). He moved the throne to Jerusalem after capturing the city from the Jebusites and winning the allegiance of the rest of the tribes, who had been loyal to Saul.

THE TRADITIONAL "King David's Banquet" is a much more modest affair.

I refer to the Melaveh Malka/Queen's Escort, the festive meal eaten after Shabbat is out and the Havdala/Distinguishing rite has been performed.

In the liturgy, but also in early Zionist "secular" poetry, Shabbat is crowned as "Queen/Bride Shabbat," and the Friday evening synagogue service is called the Kabbalat Shabbat/Welcoming Shabbat service.

A high point of this service is the "Lecha dodi" hymn, composed by

A VIEW FROM NOV
MOSHE KOHN

the 16th-century Safed kabbalist Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz. The refrain is "Let us, my love, go and greet the Bride; let us welcome Shabbat." The last stanza ends with, "Come, O Bride; Come, O Bride."

Those who follow the liturgy arranged by Rabbi Yitzhak Luria, Alkabetz's contemporary and founder of the school of Kabbalah bearing his name, say "Come, O Bride" a third time and add the words, "Queen Shabbat." The early Safed Lurianists would also go out of the synagogue and chant this facing the setting sun.

And just as Queen Shabbat is given a royal welcome Friday evening, so should she be given a royal sendoff Saturday night. So writes the 16th-century halachic authority Rabbi Shmuel ben David Halevi, better known as "The *Taz*," the acronym of *Turei Zahav*, his commentary on the *Shulhan Aruch* code of Jewish law.

The author of the *Shulhan*, Rabbi Yosef Caro, a contemporary and fellow townsman of Rabbi Alkabetz and Luria, lists the eating of a festive meal on Saturday night as an injunction ("Orah Hayim," Section 300). The *Taz* adds that this feast should be accompanied by the chanting of hymns, "to escort the Shabbat out just as royalty is escorted on arrival and departure."

The idea of a "fourth Shabbat meal" originates in the Talmud. Rabbi Hanina tells us to eat a festive repast after Shabbat is out, even if it consists of no more than a *kezayit*, an olive-sized bite (*Shabbat* 117b and 119b).

Kabbalists and Hassidim often conduct the Melaveh Malka well into the night, believing that the punishment of the dead sinners in Hell halts for Shabbat and is resumed only after the feast, with its singing and sacred discourse, is over.

The Melaveh Malka came to be called *Se'udat David* *Hamelech/King David's Banquet*. This is based on a legend that God told David he would die on Shabbat (*Shabbat* 30a). So at the end of every Shabbat that he sur-

vived, David made himself a party.

Some favorite Melaveh Malka hymns are "Eliyahu Hanavi," in honor of Prophet Elijah who is to herald "Messiah son of David," and "Amar Hashem l'Yaacov," "God told [Patriarch] Jacob: Do not fear, Jacob My servant."

Another popular song, which is also chanted at other festive occasions the year round, is "*David melech Yisrael hai vekayam*." Some scholars say that this chant, declaring that "David king of Israel is alive and well," was a password during the Bar-Kochba Revolt while it was succeeding. I doubt that the spiritual atmosphere at that \$600-a-plate "King David's Banquet" is to be laid by that culture impresario will even remotely resemble that of the traditional Saturday night one. And I hope that King David's name will not have been pinned on something whose spirit more closely resembles that of *Saturday Night Live*.

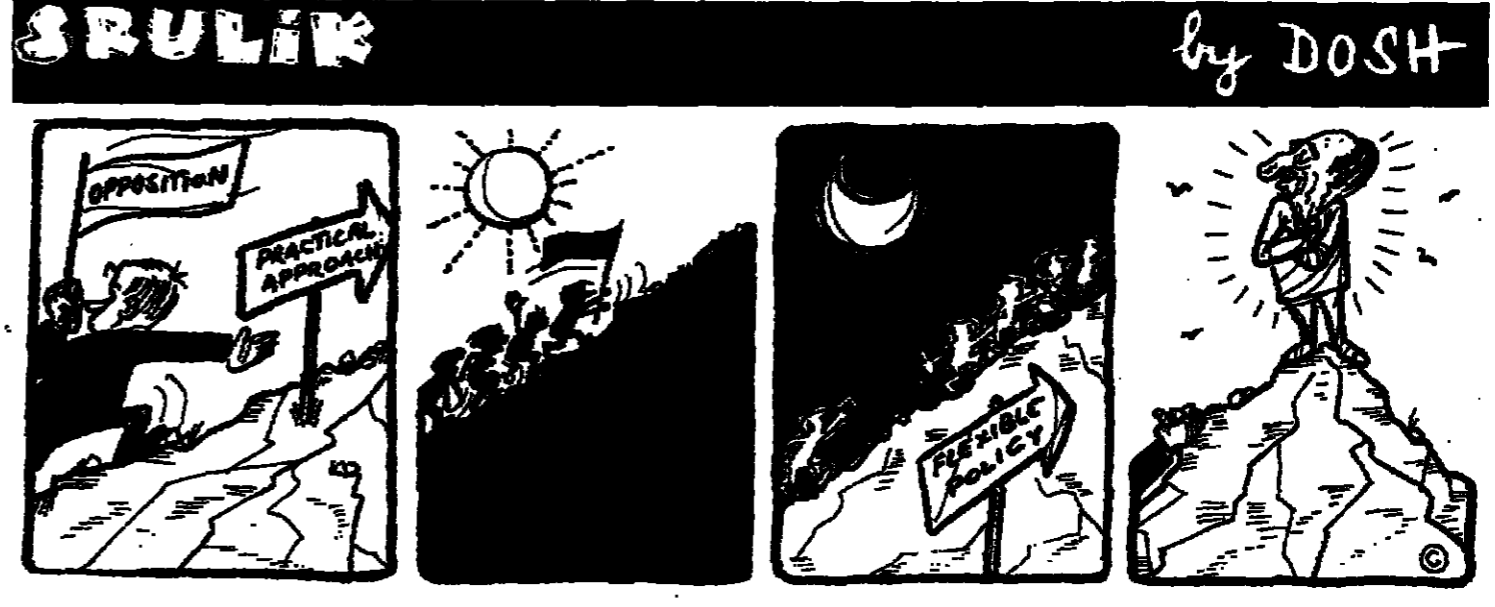
ALSO UNDER the "Jerusalem 3000" rubric, a four-day conference is to begin at the Hebrew University Sunday on "A Hundred Years of Culture in Eretz Yisrael."

I asked a university spokesperson what century-old event in Eretz Yisrael culture this conference is to celebrate. All he could say was that 1896 was one year before the First Zionist Congress.

The university's announcement opens by saying the idea of the conference was born of "the recognition [that] one of the brightest achievements of the century of renewed Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael is the creation of a Hebrew secular culture..."

Perhaps the organizers could still find room in the program for a talk by poet/publicist Dalia Ravikovitch, an avowed secularist, in which she could elaborate on her thesis that "there is no secular culture in this country" (*Shishi*, December 22, 1995).

MATTHEW ARNOLD, the 19th-century poet/essayist, defined culture as "the acquainting ourselves with the best that has been known and said in the world, and thus with the history of the human spirit" (*Literature and Dogma*).



Tu Bishvat: An act of hope

"And God said to Moses, Why are you crying out to me? Speak to the Israelites and let them start moving." (Exodus 14:15)

ACCORDING to the Jewish calendar, spring is first welcomed this coming Monday, Tu Bishvat (the 15th day of Shvat) by planting new trees. But isn't it strange to effectively call February 5 — and some years it's even earlier — spring? After all, rain and sometimes even snow are still falling.

For a basic answer, we don't have to look further than the Talmud itself. Yes, our Sages agree, it may be that the 15th of Shvat is still winter in most senses. However, by that date, the majority of the winter rains are over. (B.T. *Rosh Hashana* 14a)

The Sages seem to be teaching a poignant message of faith and optimism. Once the worst of the winter has passed, we can begin to look forward to — and in a sense even experience — the blessed approach of spring. Hence they have established the first day of spring in a period of the year which has aspects of both seasons — winter in terms of the dark cold present, spring in terms of the bright warm future.

This is probably the reason that in biblical symbolism spring represents redemption. The Song of Songs evokes the nascent buds and cooing turtle doves as a foreshadowing of the Messianic Age. Hence, planting trees while winter is still with us means that even if we have not yet reached final Redemption, as long as most of history's "winter rains" are over, we're ready to take a leap of faith. Personally as well as nationally, redemption requires faith that the sun will shine.

LEST THIS last parallel be thought of as stretching a point, remember that Tu Bishvat always falls near the Torah portion of *Beshalah*, which opens with the Exodus in process: "And it came to pass when Pharaoh let the people go." (Ex. 13:17)

SHABBAT SHALOM
SHLOMO RISKIN

The parallel goes even deeper. Just before the final plague, when the Israelites are still enslaved, Moses commands them — in God's name — to celebrate the first seder. The Israelites are asked to be thankful for redemption even before it has arrived. This is why the Zohar calls matza "bread of faith."

But faith is only the beginning. The central event in *Beshalah* is the splitting of the Red Sea, the vivid reminder that even if you make your Pesach preparations, and God performs miracles to get you out, it still doesn't mean you've been redeemed. Your enemy may yet change his mind.

To the Israelites all seems lost; they believe their only recourse is prayer and collectively cry out to God. The Divine response to Moses is instructive for all generations: "Why are you crying out to me? Speak to the Israelites and let them start moving! Raise your staff, and stretch your hand over the sea." (Ex. 14:15-16)

If a raised staff will split the sea, why tell the Israelites to start moving? Apparently, although God is fully capable of working miracles. He is waiting for us to take the first step. The Israelites themselves must begin to take responsibility — and action — for their own redemption.

This profound idea — that action must be a precursor to prayer — was further delineated by the 13th-century sage, Nahmanides (Ramban): "When you go to war against an enemy who attacks you in your land, you shall blow a trembling, staccato sound with your trumpet, and you will then be remembered before the Lord your God and you will be delivered from your enemies." (Numbers 10:9)

NAHMANIDES understands the *teru'a* sound of the trumpet as a prayerful cry for help. On this basis, he says we are biblically mandated

to pray only in times of danger. Rabbically, of course, we are commanded to pray three times a day, possibly because every individual is in constant danger from the forces surrounding him.

However, it is important to note that this very Nahmanidean prayer emerges against the backdrop of a war in which you must first fight for your life. Of course, prayer is significant, but it cannot be detached from human action.

My revered teacher and mentor, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, adds another dimension to this concept.

The Sages of the Talmud, in the beginning of Tractate Berachot, ordain that the blessing thanking God as the Redeemer of Israel must be immediately joined to the *Amida* (Silent Prayer); we must link our redemption to the *Amida* prayer. This is usually interpreted to mean that our redemption is precipitated by our prayer.

Not so, insists Soloveitchik, turning the Talmudic adage on its head. After all, he argues, prophecy and prayer are two sides of the same coin, each expressing an intimate dialogue between the individual and the Divine. The difference is that in prophecy God initiates the encounter, whereas in prayer we make the first approach. Hence linking redemption to prayer may mean that in the former as well as in the latter, it is up to humans to take the first step.

From this perspective, planting a seedling on Tu Bishvat must be seen as something far more profound than a back-to-nature ritual. It's the necessary concomitant to faith in spring even while winter rains are falling, faith in redemption while oppression continues, faith in human action as the first step toward ultimate triumph.

Perhaps the quintessential symbol of Judaism is a group of Jews buffeted by wind and rain, planting trees of hope in their beloved, eternal homeland.

Shabbat Shalom

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2♣ pass 20 pass
2♥ pass 3♠ pass
4♥ (all pass)
Opening lead: ♠A

spades would set up declarer's king. So East signaled with the six of diamonds, encouraging, planning to play the nine if West continued.

Now it was declarer's turn. Many declarers would simply ruff the trick and play on trumps, but this declarer was smarter. He discarded the five of spades on the first trick, allowing the ace of diamonds to win, and West was still on lead.

West knew that her partner was not ready for a spade shift, or else he would have played the two of diamonds at trick one. Nor was she anxious to shift to clubs, possibly finessing her partner. So she continued with the king of diamonds and declarer ruffed it.

That solved her immediate problem, but now the defense could never play another diamond without giving declarer a free trick with dummy's queen. South ruffed the second diamond, played his top trumps, and then a fourth round to West's jack.

West found herself on lead yet again. This time she had to play a black card, but which?

On the third and fourth rounds of trumps, East had signaled his club length by throwing the deuce of clubs (showing an odd number), followed by the nine. West was sure of declarer's original shape: 3-7-0-3. If she played a club, not only might she finesse her partner's honor, but she would give an entry to dummy's diamond queen.

So she played the ace of spades followed by the six of spades, giving South the spade king, but not the contract. The defense had three tricks and South still had a club loser... unless East unguarded his queen.

South played out all his trumps, coming down to his three clubs. On the last trump, East was down to the queen of spades and three clubs and still had to discard.

After an agonizing minute, the pressure became unbearable. East had to find the right discard or he would give the vulnerable contract. And worse, he was partnered with his wife, so if he made a mistake, he would never hear the end of it!

Meanwhile, West, in love with the new-age signaling system, had played the jack of diamonds followed by a lower one, signaling that she held something in spades, and that something must be the 13th spade. East, who would have much preferred to see that eight of spades in person, finally threw his queen of spades and declarer was down one. It was a happy ending for the defense, but not without a few new gray hairs.

A leading specialist once took readings of bridge players after a three-hour session and found that the physical stress of the players was far greater than that of basketball or football players. One reason given was the lack of a physical release during the bridge game. Yelling at your partner may, indeed, be poor etiquette, but the steam you let off might be physically to your benefit!

Today's deal comes from a pair championship at the Beit America Club in Tel Aviv. The declarer and the defenders began a unique battle with the first trick, ending in a hair-raising finale.

The first move in a physical sport is rarely vital. Usually the drama of a game builds up until the final moments, when the tension reaches its highest. At bridge, trick one is often crucial. West led the ace of diamonds against South's four-heart contract. After dummy followed low, both East and South had to make important plays.

It was East's job to signal his partner. Most players would signal with the deuce, showing no interest in further diamond plays, but this East-West were using the New-Age "Obvious-Shift" carding methods.

The signal of the deuce would not only discourage a diamond continuation, but encourage a switch to the obvious switch suit, dummy's weaker suit. In this case, spades was the obvious switch and East was not sure he wanted a spade switch from partner.

If West held the king of spades, a spade switch would be fine, but if West held the ace, a switch to



Thistles, artichokes, dandelions and other wildflowers have joined the parachutist parade. (R. Nowitz)

Parachutists are here

Over the last week, there has been an airborne invasion around here. The parachutists have come in almost a dozen varieties, each different but each equally potent. They were not enemy troops, but seeds.

Wherever the ground is prepared to receive them, they have a place to land and, I am sorry to say, a lot of these places are in my well-watered and tilled garden.

Every one of these individualized parachutes only required a few dry, windy and warm days to go into action. All the thistles, artichokes, dandelions and a host of other plants and wildflowers have joined the parade. But when they land in my garden they do resemble enemy troops.

Parachutes are only one of the methods that plants employ to propagate their species. Some plants go snap, crackle and pop, and their pods throw their seeds afar to be dispersed later by rain-storm runoff. Some are so small that, attached to a bit of down, they

NATURE D'VORA BEN SHAUL

are dispersed in great numbers by the wind.

Among the most interesting of the seeds are those that are dispersed by willing or even unwitting hosts. Animals and humans play a vital role in this dispersal. The seeds of some plants get caught in the fur or feathers of other species or in people's clothing.

Other plants are dispersed when the animal or human host actually eats them. This is the case where birds, especially, eat a fruit but later eject the seed in a new place. So do humans. Just take a walk along any sewage channel, for example, and you will find enough peppers and tomatoes to feed an army. You won't find any egg-plants growing that way here, because we always cook this vegetable, but just go to the sewage channels of Indonesia where egg-plant is eaten raw and you will find

just as ample a supply of this plant as well.

The most wonderful seed I have ever encountered is the coconut. When it falls from a tree it has nowhere to go but down again, rolling down the tropical hill coconut palms always occupy. The coconut rolls until it reaches a place where it is no longer able to move. The sands and the dirt of the area blow around it. Its surface hairs collect every bit of moisture and, in time, the sprouts inside, warmed by the sun, come alive. The sprouts are so strong that they exit through the three tiny apertures in the coconut that resemble a monkey's face. But the plant is still inside.

Only after a long time, the roots grow, fed by the milk and the meat of the coconut. As they expand, they not only push out the sprouts but break by the now rotting shell before penetrating the soil.

The coconut is just one of the plant world's sagas of rebirth that never cease to fascinate me.

Help ease the pain

FUNDS
BEVERLEE BLACK

Imagine that you are in chronic pain because your teeth are hurting, but you can't afford treatment. Imagine that you are hard of hearing, but don't have enough money to do anything about it.

Tens of thousands of elderly and impoverished citizens face these problems.

Our Forsake Me Not Fund tries in its small way to alleviate these problems. Last week we gave over NIS 25,000 to subsidize ongoing dental work and help purchase hearing-aids for those in need. But this is only a drop in the ocean.

Nobody who is in desperate need and requires help will be turned away, even though, in most cases, we can only contribute a portion of what is needed.

While our funds continue to grow, the demand on our limited resources grows even faster. Please keep your donations flowing, but best of all, ask a friend or relative to give.

The need is great. Send your checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, POB 81, Jerusalem 91000.

Donors in the US wishing to receive tax benefits can send their donations to: Friends of The Jerusalem Post Funds, 211 E. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017. Please designate in your letter to which fund you wish to donate.

All donations received will be given to the Jewish National Fund. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who so generously participated in this campaign.

WELCOME HOME FUND

NIS 200 Anon., J'm.
NIS 30 Miriam and Benjamin Fruchtman, Tel Aviv.
\$55 Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Layfer, Wilmette, IL.
\$36 In blessed memory of my beloved wife Dr. Florence Segelman, a woman of valor - Dr. Alvin Segelman, Orem, UT.
\$35 Delma Goldstein, Chevy Chase, MD.
\$18 In honor of the birth of my great-grandson, Solomon Doran, and to my grandchildren, Avrah and Tivela Weiser - Bill Weiser, J'm and Woodmere, NY.
\$14 Friday maadka money of the pre-schoolers of The Jewish Education - Early Childhood Center at Beit Tikvah, Deerfield, IL.
\$11 In memory of my uncle David Barnat - Bronka Flechowitz, Rome, Italy.

New Donations	Progress Totals
NIS 903.40	NIS 12,126.95
\$400	\$5,994.69

(Other currencies converted to NIS)

FORSAKE ME NOT

NIS 200 Anon., J'm. L. Flecher, J'm.
NIS 118 In memory of my mother-in-law, Queenie Eisen - Isaac Eisen, Westbury, Mass., J'm.
NIS 100 From M. and B.J., Ra'anana, Anon., J'm.
NIS 36 In memory of Bobbi Evelyn by the Family.
NIS 30 Miriam and Benjamin Fruchtman, Tel Aviv.
NIS 18 In memory of our mother, Rebekkah Bentzion Cohen - Aviva and Al Cohen, Netanya. In honor of our mother Sara Elling - Aviva and Al Cohen.
\$55 Mr and Mrs. Lawrence Layfer, Wilmette, IL.
\$36 In blessed memory of my beloved wife Dr. Florence Segelman, a woman of valor - Dr. Alvin Segelman, Orem, UT.
\$35 Delma Goldstein, Chevy Chase, MD.
\$18 In honor of the birth of my great-grandson, Solomon Doran, and to my grandchildren, Avrah and Tivela Weiser - Bill Weiser, J'm and Woodmere, NY.
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\$11 In memory of my uncle David Barnat - Bronka Flechowitz, Rome, Italy.

New Donations	Progress Totals
NIS 230	NIS 1,837
\$139	\$1,340

(Other currencies converted to NIS)

JERUSALEM CORRIDOR EMERGENCY APPEAL

NIS 750 Professor Eric Meadon, J'm.
NIS 360 Rita Feldman, Ellat.
NIS 30 Sarah Nachshon, J'm.
NIS 230 Wanda Zilber, Zilber Zion.
NIS 200 Chana Hochstein, Ashdod.
NIS 100 Anon. Peter Singer, J'm. Dorit Tal, Karmit, Prof. and Mrs. Norbert and Sheila Berkowitz, J'm. Hannah Kaplan, Ashkelon. Boaz Menashe, Ra'anana. The Elman Family, Anon.
NIS 90 Branner and Morris Families.
NIS 75 Marilyn Fragle, J'm.
NIS 60 Ruth Lagan, Zilber Ya'acov.
NIS 36 Ellen Schuller, J'm.
NIS 25 Rae and Julius Kovacs, Ramat Hasharon. Anon. and Michael Krass, Ashkelon.
NIS 20 Rita Gordon, Ra'anana.
NIS 15 Evi Berkson, Netanya.
NIS 10 Anon. Paul, J'm.
NIS 10 Mr. and Mrs. Judith Mogilensky, Silver Spring, MD.
NIS 6 Dr. Richard and Phyllis Rosen, Mt. Vernon, NY. Lionel Leff, Ra'anana.
CSO Korykape, Winnipeg, Canada.

Total for Jerusalem Corridor Emergency Appeal (all money converted into NIS)

New Donations: NIS 4,094.56 Total: NIS 108,641.06

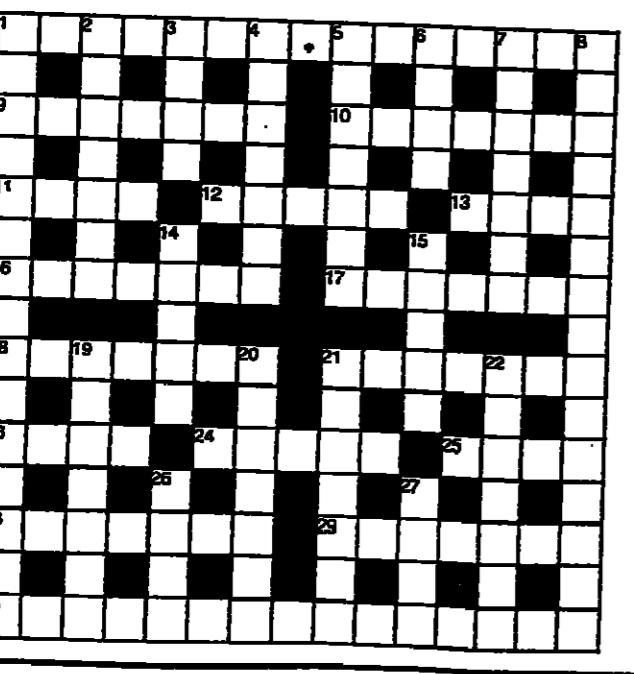
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Survive a heavy blow (7,3,5)
- Soon led astray and may end in the soup (7)
- Taking the offensive is a help in the boxing arena (7)
- Bound to leave out (4)
- Retinue prepare for performance (5)
- Break in, being unafraid of human contact (4)
- Looks at with an expression of friendliness (7)
- Composer is brought back in iron, but set free (7)
- Festival now beginning in the Orient (7)
- Mr. Kelly has a twitch—it's hereditary (7)
- Communication—possibly barbed (4)
- He is very selective about the movies he goes to (5)
- Stomach supporter of the wine glass (4)
- You need your cuses for this sort of holiday (7)
- Bloomer may be a big one (7)
- Cash required to support athletes? (7,8)

DOWN

- It's swinging in the rain (10,5)
- Worshipping a barbaric rain god (7)
- A fraction drunk (4)
- Places visited on holidays, or between holidays (7)
- Bird dog (7)
- Pole to feel sick on voyage (4)
- Employment of paper folders (7)
- Attractive stretch revealed by guide (8,7)
- Profession for which many rush (5)
- Gun is taken to pieces in practice (5)
- A contest between two Poles and an Arab (7)
- Gets information about raising money for the future (4,3)
- Suit case put in the car (7)
- Eccentric aunt upset about disease (7)
- Embargo put on one in an Italian port (4)
- He plays a big part in children's tales (4)

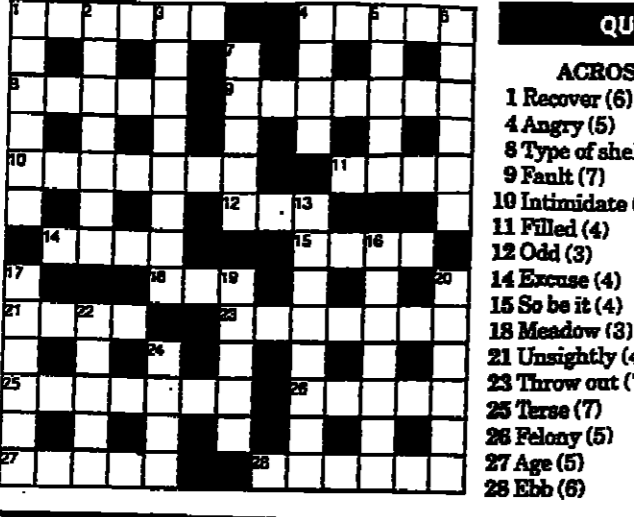


SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's Quick Solution

ACROSS: 1 Sleeper, 5 Round, 8 Noise, 9 Pounded, 10 Expressions, 13 Roe, 15 Anon., 14 Chests, 17 Ash, 18 Philander, 20 Absolve, 21 Taste, 23 Treat, 24 Thyself.

DOWN: 1 Same, 2 EL, 3 Present, 4 Repeat, 5 Rode, 6 Undersand, 7 Dodgers, 11 Post haste, 15 Adament, 16 Healthy, 16 Nicest, 18 Pilot, 19 Reeve, 22 Sid.



QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Recover (6)
- Angry (5)
- Type of shell (5)
- Fault (7)
- Intimidate (7)
- Filled (4)
- Odd (3)
- Excuse (4)
- So be it (4)
- Meadow (3)
- Unrightly (4)
- Throw out (7)
- Texas (7)
- Felony (5)
- Age (5)
- Ebb (6)

DOWN

- Calculate (6)
- Hide (7)
- Eruption (8)
- Flag (4)
- Goodbye (5)
- Overwhelm (6)
- Tender (5)
- Carnage (8)
- Shifty (7)
- Drawn (6)
- Viper (5)
- Stick (6)
- Jargon (5)
- Wealthy (4)

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Prevent weeds from taking root

Solving weed problems in your garden means attacking the problem while it is still controllable. The longer you wait, the worse it gets, and it never goes away by itself.

The increasing warmth and sunshine at this time of year not only promote the growth of new flowers, but also promote the sprouting of weeds. It seems as though there is always one part of the garden which needs to be cleared of freshly sprouted weeds.

Weeds will appear in the best-tended gardens. Some will be blown in by the wind, not only from your neighbor's overgrown garden, but from areas many miles away.

Mother nature has provided them with the most wonderful array of wings, propellers and feathery heads to help them travel long distances. Some of the seeds will travel on the coat of a passing dog or cat, some will arrive on the feathers of a bird. There's no way to keep them out of our gardens.

The ground becomes covered with almost invisible weed seeds and they seem to germinate year round. Mild, damp, winter weather is the time when the appearance of all these sprouts is the worst. It's also the time when it is easiest to get rid of them.

This is the opportunity, while they are still young and have just germinated or are still small seedlings with undeveloped root systems. The longer you let them grow, the tougher they get.

There are many chemical weed killers on the market but, of course, your self-seeding annuals are just

GARDENING INEZ KLIMIST

starting to come up now too, making chemicals an undesirable response. There is no good substitute for a small hand hoe or three-toothed cultivator and a pair of good knee pads. Some garden gloves are helpful too. You don't need to buy a special pair, just use some old winter gloves which are about to be thrown out.

Remember that in this instance, an ounce of prevention is well worth the pound of cure. If you spend a little time every couple of weeks keeping the soil aerated and loose, you can prevent the germination of seeds by killing them before they start.

Don't wait for the weeds to appear. While you are cultivating, pull out all the tiny sprouts. The soil is soft, wet and very pliable now so the roots should come out easily.

There are several ailanthus trees around my garden, and at this time of year, I can grab hold of 10 or 15 sprouts at one time and just lift them right out of the soil. They are the worst part of my weeding job, and it's very satisfying to get rid of them early on. If I leave them, in no time at all they form huge root systems which have to be dug out with a spade.

This is a job for a sunny day. It's a waste of time to weed when the ground is soaked or when rain is imminent. It's also much more pleasant to work outdoors with the soft, warm sun on your back and a promise of spring.

tivar used. What does it mean?

A cultivar (short for cultivated variety) is a plant that has been hybridized. It most likely won't be able to survive in the wild for more than a few generations. The term was invented by botanists to distinguish cultivated varieties from natural varieties of species that originate and reproduce in the wild.

Most garden plants are cultivars. The term is used interchangeably with variety, horticultural variety and garden variety. Hybrid cultivars of different strains are given names to differentiate various colors, types or sizes and to protect patents on newly developed plants.

D.S. asks: I have a lot of seeds left over from last year. How can I tell if they are still good enough to use?

Most seeds will remain capable of germinating for three to five years if properly stored in dry, cool conditions. The only way to know for sure is to run a germination test.

Count out 20 seeds from the packet onto three layers of pre-moistened paper towels. Roll the towels up carefully and tuck into a plastic bag. Keep it in a warm place. Check the seeds after three or four days, and thereafter every day for a week.

Allow three weeks for most varieties to germinate. If a root protrudes from the seed coat, the seed has germinated. You will be able to determine how healthy the seeds are and whether they are worth planting by simply counting how many have germinated. If the germination rate has dropped by more than a third, throw the seeds away and buy a new packet.



WINTER DRIVING TIPS

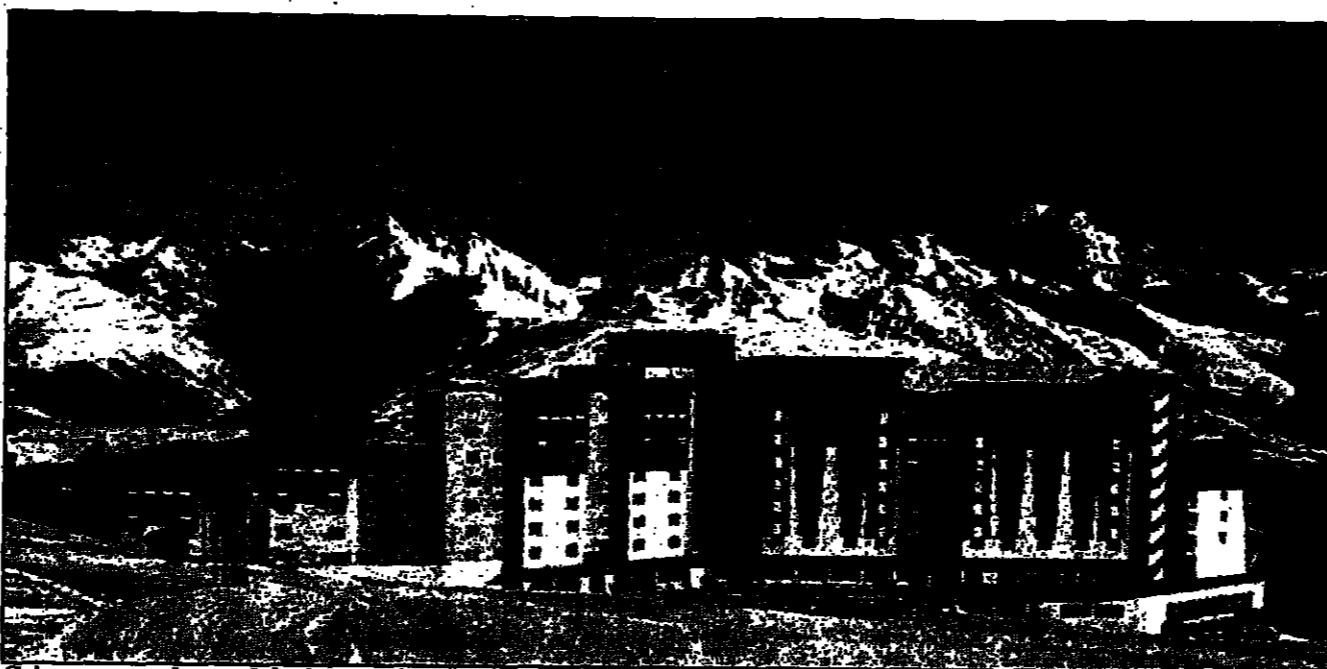
Use headlights when light is poor

SAFE DRIVING SAVES LIVES

Club Med's good when it's Club Alp too

Good family holiday

Eating and skiing take precedence on this vacation to La Plagne, Judy Rabinowitz writes



Crisp snow and one of the largest skiing terrains in Europe greet holidaymakers who 'Club Med it' at La Plagne.

Sometimes, life as a journalist has its perks, and being invited on a complimentary skiing holiday to the Alpine resort of La Plagne by Club Med was one of them. As my friend Dorit remarked in envy, "Some people get all the luck."

And she was right. During over 30 years of operation Club Med has deservedly built up a worldwide reputation for providing what are - by most standards anyway - quality vacations at affordable prices.

This well-run, French-based company now has 120 villages worldwide, including two "summer" resorts in Israel (at Coral Beach in Eilat and at Arziv in the north). Nineteen of these are skiing villages dotted across the Alps. One, at Meribel, has dropped the usual all-inclusive package holiday approach, and now provides serious five-star à la carte luxury at a price which doesn't come cheap.

But the others stick with the traditional formula - you pay a set price and then (in addition to travel and accommodation) get as much delicious food, wine and beer, nighttime entertainment and, most importantly for this holiday, free skiing lessons (including a free ski pass), all thrown in at no extra cost.

La Plagne is one of Club Med's best resorts. Located 2,100 meters high in the Savoie mountains in France, the resort is surrounded by a vast skiing terrain, made up of 10 satellite resorts, which together make up the "Trois Vallées," one of the largest ski domains in Europe.

MANY WOULD say it's worth going on a Club Med holiday if only for the food, which is great (as one might expect from a French-run company). Eating from the sumptuous buffets at Club Med is a serious occupation. And believe me, I took it very

seriously. In fact for me, harder even than staying upright on the ski slopes, was arranging my eating schedule. Normally, at home my breakfast involves grabbing half a yoghurt as I rush out the front door. At Club Med, I went down to the dining room early enough to make sure I had enough time to taste everything: the crispy croissants, the stuffed pizza-topped tomatoes, the tasty Danishes. And that was just breakfast.

Weighed down with a full stomach, I headed onto the snow for what should have been the real fun, or in my case - since I

was a beginner - it was more like *into* the snow, since I ended up slipping and sliding down the mountainside with my good-looking Italian instructor, Luka, in tow to rescue me.

"Lean forward," Luka shouted at me, as he waited arms outstretched to catch me.

"I am leaning forward," I shouted back, as I went whizzing straight past him at what seemed like 100 km/h, but by then I was going in the wrong direction - and on my butt. I overheard one guy ask his friend,

"Doesn't that girl have legs? Every time I see her she is sliding through the snow on

her backside." Luka had to dig me out of the snow so many times that if they'd put a carrot on my nose and left me there, I would have made a great snowman.

The skiing day ended around 4 p.m. when we would trudge back to the hotel to be greeted by a steaming cup of hot chocolate or a glass of home-made punch.

Then the question was whether to take a sauna, a massage, an aerobics class, exercise in the well-equipped fitness room, or just go to sleep. Such difficult decisions.

And then, guess what? More eating, much more. The range of delicious dishes to choose from at dinner matched those at breakfast, and as I wanted to try the lot, I somehow managed to stretch my stomach just a little bit more.

In the evenings, an entertainment troupe came up with some very funny shows which kept us rolling in our seats. Later on, at midnight, it was time to go downstairs to the disco to dance away the night.

AT CLUB Med there are (officially at any rate) no staff or guests. Instead you are referred to as a "gentil membre" (GM) and you are looked after by a "gentil organisateur" (GO). The job of the GO is to make everything run smoothly. They are relaxed and easy-going, and don't wear uniforms or accept tips. The same GO can eat breakfast with you, act as your ski instructor, and then join you in the evening for a drink, at dinner, or even for a boogie on the dance floor.

Another good reason to take a winter ski holiday with Club Med is that if your companions are of different skiing abilities than yourself, there are plenty of free classes provided to cater for all levels. Although this was my first Club Med trip, I'm sure it won't be my last.

Club Med offers all-inclusive winter ski holidays: return flights, transfers, full board, accommodation, ski pass, ski lessons with qualified instructors at all levels, children's clubs, evening entertainment and insurance.

In addition to skiing, you can learn to snowboard, toboggan, bobsleigh, and ice-raft. You can also play tennis, squash, and go ice skating.

Club Med provides children's clubs at most of its ski villages, where children have their own ski school and can be looked after for most of the day, allowing parents to relax and enjoy themselves away from the kids.

Chamonix, at the foot of Mont Blanc, is an ideal place for families. There is a baby club and ski lessons start from four years old.

For those of you who don't want small kids around, Val D'Isere offers a very high standard of comfort, has three restaurants and a fitness center, and welcomes children only over the age of 10. It is ideal for both intermediate and expert skiers.

Les Arcs, in the heart of the Savoie Alps, offers a Snowboarding School, which is ideal for teenagers, and a 10 percent discount for 10- to 17-year-olds.

J.R.

The local biblical landscape reserve

SEE IT HERE HAIM SHAPIRO

ON Tu B'Shvat, which falls on Monday, it is easy to find flowering almond trees all around the country, but to learn something about the almond tree and the holiday, a visit to Neot Kedumim is in order.

Known as a "biblical landscape reserve," Neot Kedumim was founded in 1965 by Nogah Hareuveni in an attempt to recreate landscapes of the Bible. This is not an easy task, since ancient Canaan, like the modern State of Israel, included a large variety of climatic and soil conditions in a relatively small area. Scholars also disagree on the identity of some of the species mentioned in the Bible.

However, it was only by visiting Neot Kedumim recently that I learned why we celebrate the New Year for Trees on a day when hardly any native tree is bearing fruit. It is the cutoff date for figuring the amount of offerings one must give to the priestly caste (*kohanim*) in any particular year, just as January 1 marks the end of the previous tax year.

One of the few trees which does bear fruit on Tu B'Shvat is the etrog, or citron, and the park has a citron tree with one enormous fruit and a few smaller ones nesting in its branches.

The citron tree is small and fairly inconspicuous, but among the more evident trees are the cedars, which are flourishing, despite being far from their native Lebanese soil. Not far from the cedars is the hyssop, a wild oregano known to us as the main ingredient of the Middle Eastern seasoning, za'atar. In the Bible, the cedar is equated with pride, the low-growing hyssop with humility.

Although the area is mainly devoted to plants, those seeking an ancient site will appreciate the fact that a village stood here during the Second Temple and Byzantine periods. The presence of about 50 cisterns indicates that it had a population of about 500.



Neot Kedumim helps answer questions about the diverse landscapes gracing the land of the Bible.

In one such cistern, which is equipped with a ladder, the drama of the Joseph saga becomes crystal clear. This was the "pit" into which Joseph's brothers put him. Once inside a roomy but not very inviting cistern, the visitor becomes aware of just how helpless a prisoner would be, with no means of escape.

AS LUCK would have it, the area also provides suitable remains for both religious Jews, who can visit an ancient *mikve*, or ritual bath, and Christians, who can see the remains of a Byzantine chapel, complete with a cross in the mosaic floor.

The site is open to both organized groups and individuals from 8:30 a.m. to sunset on weekdays and 8:30 to 1 on Fridays. It is closed on Shabbat and the last entry is two hours before closing time. Groups can arrange for a

guided tour and there is also a weekly tour for individuals on Friday at 9:30. Admission is NIS 16 for adults, NIS 11 for children. For those who prefer to wander about on their own, there are three self-guided tour trails with written explanations. Visitors may also rent an electronic Easy-Guide, with recorded explanations which can be called up at spots throughout the park. Most of the park is wheelchair accessible and there are also golf carts available for visitors who have difficulty walking.

Neot Kedumim is near Modi'in. To reach it from Tel Aviv, take the Ben Shimon exit on the Jerusalem Highway, turn left at the traffic light, and then left again at the sign to Neot Kedumim about three kilometers down the road. From Jerusalem, it is best to take the

Ramat-Ben Shimon road. Visitors traveling in either direction should look carefully for the turn, since road construction has played havoc with the road signs.

'Little Jerusalem' is featured on tour of Jewish Italy

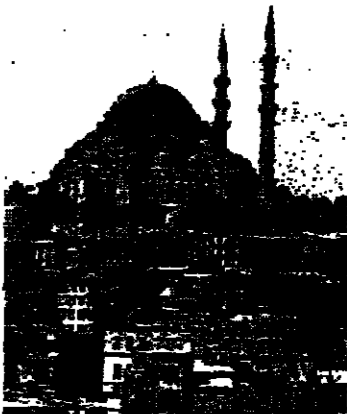
TRAVEL TIPS HAIM SHAPIRO

ends. Ein Zivan is offering a midweek rate of NIS 175 per couple with breakfast, including entry to the Hermon.

TRAVEL MAKERS, a new travel wholesaler, is offering vouchers for the Treff chain of four-star hotels in Germany and Switzerland. Vouchers for all the hotels cost a set price of DM 118 for a single, DM 132 for a room for two or three, DM 158 for a room for four, and DM 200 for a room for five. The company also promises to refund any unused vouchers, with no cancellation or service fee.

JOINING THE Internet bandwagon is British Airways, which will provide "surfers" with worldwide timetables, plans of airplanes, including seating diagrams, and information for business people. The address is:

http://www.british-airways.com.



Hagia Sophia in Istanbul.

A PRIVATE tour of Istanbul is being offered by Netivei Keshet of Yossi Tours for \$409. The price includes a round-trip fare, three nights with breakfast in a four-star hotel, a day of touring with lunch with a local guide, and a visit with dinner to a night club with a belly dancer.

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ON THURSDAY - TRAVEL DAY IN THE JERUSALEM POST

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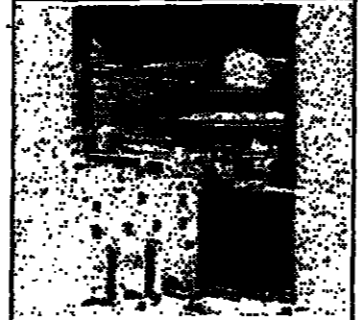
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On a cross-country spurt to redemption

An Israeli who has worked closely with Ethiopians says he is optimistic about the community's future, Abraham Rabinovich reports

Peachy first got to know Ethiopian Jews on their own turf when he visited the remote hills of Ethiopia's Gondar region in 1989. "Their walk was a half-run," he recalled this week. "Their bodies leaned slightly forward and they covered tremendous distances."

Upon returning to Israel, he took a job working with Ethiopians who had arrived in the country a few years earlier. "My first meeting was in Ashkelon with a group being discharged from the army. We had to walk a few hundred meters to register them for an educational program. When I said let's start walking they said 'Are you crazy, Peachy? Let's wait for a bus or a taxi.' I said 'Are you crazy? Do you remember the distances you walked in Ethiopia?'"

Peachy Ben-Meir — he does not use his given first name, Yoram — has for the past five years been director of the Division for the Advancement of Ethiopian Jews of the Joint (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee).

His ruddy, white-bearded countenance was one of the few white faces visible in the milling ranks of the Ethiopians whose violent demonstration outside the prime minister's office on Sunday shocked the nation and marked a major turning point in the shaping of the Ethiopian community. "They were assuming leadership," says Peachy.

Although the veteran community worker identifies strongly enough with the Ethiopians' sense of anguish to have joined their demonstration he does not believe that Israeli society has cause for guilt feelings. "There is no reason to beat our breasts. Much more

has been done, and done better, than in the absorption of previous immigration waves."

The difficulties encountered by the Ethiopians, says Peachy, are inevitable. "The Talmud says that redemption, when it comes, will be step by step. You cannot move a tribe like this, a people, to another place with such a profound difference in culture in one jump."

"The road of absorption is a long one, it is an adventure, and there are very difficult stretches for individuals along the way and for the group. Despite the best efforts of the establishment and large parts of the Israeli public to create a bridge, there is a build-up of frustration and anger."

A former kibbutz shepherd who has written a slim book of poetry on thorns, Peachy had during his visit to Ethiopia joined young Jewish shepherds when they took their flocks of sheep out to pasture.

"We spent two nights sleeping out in the fields. There were wild animals out there including lions. The boys were just 12-15 years old and they slept like we do in the IDF on ambush, in an outward facing circle so that whoever is awake can kick the others if he sees something. There was no adult with them and they slept with spears in their hands, prepared for anything. What I saw in Ethiopia was that the Jews there stood on their own feet and could deal with anything in their environment, man or beast."

This self-reliance disappeared the moment they stepped off the plane onto the Promised Land, which turned out to be not an upscale replica of Ethiopia but a modern Western country, baffling in its strangeness.



Community worker Peachy Ben-Meir was one of the only non-Ethiopians who participated in Sunday's protest. (Zeev Ackerman)

In reaching out to help them, said Peachy, the Israeli establishment's attitude was one of paternalism, by definition. Without such paternalism, without assistance, the Ethiopian community would not have reached the stage it has in such a short time. "There would not have been 1,300 students either in university or in preparatory courses for university."

Although Peachy is himself part of the establishment, he is a very non-establishment figure. His trademark is the short pants he wears, even in the dead of winter and on the most formal of occasions. A joint program for which he is responsible has found jobs for Ethiopian men around the country and is now reaching out successfully to bring Ethiopian mothers, including a high percentage who are single parents, into the work force. Special courses have trained Ethiopians for a variety of jobs from dental assistants to bank clerks.

Despite their innate intelligence, many Ethiopians youths do poorly in school, which adds to the frustration. "Many of us are convinced that the reason they do poorly is that they stay home with their mothers, until age five, when they are obligated to go to kindergarten. They do not experience the

challenges that other kids have in pre-school programs. They fall behind and stay behind.

"The fact that so many have been able to get into university despite this handicap, after they have been exposed to enrichment programs indicates their talents." There is now a proposal afoot, says Peachy, that would get Ethiopian tots into pre-school programs, at least part of the day.

Sunday's demonstration snapped everyone awake, including the immigrants themselves. "What has to happen now is the transfer of responsibilities to the Ethiopian community itself," says Peachy.

"In working with them we will ask them now to set their own priorities and then do what has to be done to carry them out. It will be for them to draw up proposals — whether for better integrated schools, new synagogues, or whatever — and for them to point to budgetary sources."

Until now, towns in which Ethiopian groups are located have generally co-opted one or more immigrants onto committees dealing with Ethiopian communal problems. This, says Peachy, has been little more than ornamental since decision making resided with the white majority.

"What has to be done now is the creation in each of these places of joint boards dealing with communal services on which the immigrants have equal weight. There can no longer be any discussion about the fate of the community without their full participation."

Because of lessons learned from the past, the integration of the Ethiopian community will proceed even faster than previous immigration waves, says Peachy. "It was many years before the problems of, say, the Moroccan immigration, were put on the table and talked about."

Sunday's demonstration, which revealed not only depths of alienation but organizational ability and an articulate leadership, suggests that the Ethiopian Jewish community which learned to live with lions is learning to live with a well-meaning if sometimes maladroit bureaucracy.

Weizman to go back to Basel

BACK TO Basel. Fifty-one years after he showed up in 1946 at the last of the 10 Zionist Congresses held in Basel, President Ezer Weizman will be back there to attend the centennial of the first Zionist Congress. When Weizman visited in 1946, it was to see the conference chairman who happened to be his uncle, Chaim Weizmann, who was to become Israel's first president. The senior Weizmann had been participating in Zionist Congresses since 1898, the year of the second congress, and was well acquainted with Zionist visionary Theodor Herzl, who wrote in his diary that in Basel he founded the Jewish state.

THE MEMORY of Chaim Weizmann was revived during Finance Minister Avraham Shohat's recent Asian odyssey. Seeking to interest Michael

Kadoorie — scion of the wealthy and influential family of Iraqi origin — in investing in Israel, Shohat had his aides contact the Zionist Archives to ferret out copies of correspondence between Weizmann and Kadoorie's grandfather, Sir Ely Silas Kadoorie. Kadoorie's grandfather had contributed the funds to found Kadoorie Agricultural School which bears his name and which was attended by Yitzhak Rabin.

JUST A few more memories of happier times. When she accepted the invitation to attend the Israel Bonds gala Task Force dinner at the Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv, Leah Rabin did not know that she would be taking home a leather-bound photo album containing a 30-year photographic record of

the life of her late husband. The album, presented by Israel Bonds president Nathan Sharony and national campaign chairman Susan Walkers-Volchok, was carefully assembled and includes several photographs which do not appear in publications honoring Yitzhak Rabin's memory. Sharony apparently likes to provide pleasant surprises for women. At a dinner the previous night at the Laromme Hotel in Jerusalem, he publicly toasted his wife, Zelda, on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary.

DISCUSSING THE determination of the news content in radio and television broadcasts, Razi Barka, who was standing in for Micha Freedman on Educational Television's Media Brief, mentioned Yisrael Galili, who many years ago was the arbiter of what was fit to broadcast. When Barka asked studio guest Ahmed Rafik Awad, editor-in-chief of the Voice of Palestine, if the name Yisrael Galili was familiar to him, he was completely taken aback by the spontaneous reply. Awad's face lit up, he grinned ear-to-ear and said: "He was Golda Meir's lover."

AND TALKING OF lovers, Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan is now in a position to make an honest woman of Ofra Meirson, with whom he has been living for the past three or four years. After a marriage lasting close to four decades, Eitan and his wife Meirson were divorced last week at the Haifa Rabbinat. Had he been a US politician, his extramarital relationship might have cost him votes; but in Israel, it didn't affect his popularity, even after he built a home for Meirson in Tel Adashim, not far from the home he'd shared with his wife.

IF ALL goes according to plan for a pair of much younger lovers, it

will be a June wedding for singing *enfant terrible* Aviv Gefen and his 18-year-old fiancée Ilana Berkowitz. His impending change of status may account for his new image. Gefen has short his shoulder-length locks, and his clothes are not quite as exotic as those he used to wear. The marriage will enable the bride-to-be to opt out of the army, which means that neither bride nor groom — a great-nephew of Moshe Dayan — will have served in the IDF.

THOUGH MODELING is her first career choice, Kate Moss look-alike Gili Shemtov will happily seclude for politics which are in her genes. Grandpa Victor Shemtov, whom she greatly admires, is a former Health Minister.

THE 15% acquisition in Elite by Gideon Holdings, the Strauss family's investment company, must have been awfully sweet for David Federman, who outsmarted his good friend, Bino Zadik, in the battle for company control. But it was a bitter pill for lawyer David Mosevics, Elite's former managing director and son of one of the company's founding families. Just over 11 years ago, Mosevics was negotiating for Elite to purchase the controlling interest in Strauss Dairies, and now the tables have turned.

WHILE THERE is an excellent relationship between the mayors of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv — they frequently visit each other's cities for various events — it doesn't seem right that Aliza Olmert, wife of Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, should have an exhibition of her works at Tel Aviv's Neveh Tzedek Gallery in the year of Jerusalem's tricenennial celebrations. On the other hand, since Jerusalem is supposed to be an inspiration, she could argue that by taking her art out of Jerusalem, she was spreading the message.

THE TIMING was absolutely perfect. Kobi Leket, chairman of



An immigrant at last week's demonstration shows verification of donating blood; Ethiopian leaders are insisting that those responsible for the destruction of blood be punished. (Yitzhak Eshkol/Scout 89)

"They are testing us," said Dr. Chaim Peri, director of Yemin Orde Youth Village in Haifa. "When a child or a youngster who is at the stage of crystallizing his identity, he keeps testing his environment. Yes, the youth is coming out and saying: if I become a combat soldier and I am injured, my soldiers won't reach out to me because they will be afraid of my blood."

"All of them want to be told, 'No, no, no. We want you with us in the army. You are part of this society.' When you ache, when you suffer, you bring it out, you want someone to embrace you and tell you that everything is going to be all right, that you are accepted. We must do this."

IT HAS been charged that the government and education establishment are repeating the mistakes made with past immigrations. Messala threatened in the Knesset that if the grievances of Ethiopians are not redressed quickly and effectively, the ground will be laid for the emergence of fanatics such as Uzi Meshulam.

"Frankly, I think the mistakes are more severe this time, because this is now a wealthier country, which could do a lot better," says Odenheimer. "Unlike decades ago, there's no excuse. I've heard people say that every immigrant group has suffered, from the Poles to the Moroccans."

"But this isn't the 1950s anymore," Odenheimer continues. "We're looking at a different kind of society now, an Israel that is moving to a modern, fast-paced US-style model. And to create a US-style black underclass out of a group of Jews that dreamed of coming to Zion would be a true tragedy."

JUST AS importantly, Echanasa and other Ethiopian leaders have made it clear that they want punishments for those responsible for the surreptitious destruction of blood donations and for doctors who made racist statements during the controversy. The controversy has provided a glimpse of what could happen if their problems are not addressed in a substantive way. Over the past week, there have been press reports about young Ethiopian Jews expressing hesitancy about IDF service. Why should they spill their blood, they asked, for a country that does not recognize that blood as legitimate?

VOICE (Continued from Page 7) Minister's Office and spread out on the surrounding hills. Estimates put the turnout at around 10,000, no mean feat considering that the entire Ethiopian Jewish community here is less than 60,000.

For the Ethiopian Jews, the issues both then and now had more to do with pride than any material injury. In 1985, they told of the centuries of oppression which they had faced in order to remain Jews, only to be told, in effect, that they were not real Jews. Today, they were told that their blood was contaminated.

The question of contaminated blood particularly affected Iyov Woodshef, 28, because he works in a pharmaceutical company. Would they now force him to work with gloves whenever he had the smallest scratch, he wondered.

Woodshef said Ethiopian Jewish immigrants had imagined that the extensive medical examinations and blood tests which they were given were for their own good.

PERHAPS ONE of the most striking differences was the fact that while in 1985 the demonstrators seemed to be, if not typically Jewish, an exotic group long cut off from the Jewish people. A large number of demonstrators this week could easily have been taken for urban blacks in the US or England.

Dr. Shalva Weil, a Hebrew University anthropologist who has studied the community, said the way the demonstrators shook their fists reminded her of Ethiopia's former Marxist regime. She pointed out that several demonstrators carried Ethiopian flags, and some young people wore knitted hats in red, green and black, the colors of Africa.

However, only among Ethiopian Jews in Israel, as Weil pointed out, could one have seen knitted kippot with the Ethiopian flag. The wearers, she said, wanted to be part of the mainstream national-religious public, but weren't accepted, so they were forging their own identity.

But this did not mean, she said that the demonstration was evidence that we have failed in absorbing the community. Just as Israelis in 1985 brought food and blankets for the protesters, Israeli society has remained very sympathetic, she insisted.

What she saw was a unified community with superb powers of organization and natural leaders. They were very verbal Israelis of Ethiopian origin, who had the confidence to demonstrate and shout in excellent Hebrew.

For the demonstrators themselves, the lessons of Israeli history were not lost.

"We don't want to be like the Yemenites of the '50s, we don't want to be [film character] Saifan Shabati," Menashe said.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1996

15

Japanese firms, Kodak announce photo 'revolution'

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Eastman Kodak Co. and four major Japanese firms yesterday announced a "revolutionary" new line of photographic film and cameras...

Kodak and four rivals - Fuji Photo Film, Minolta, Canon, and Nikon - put aside their differences to share the costs in developing a common standard designed to replace the current 35 mm. standard.

In separate statements, Kodak and Fuji said the new system would allow easier enlargements and protect negatives.

Real interest rates to stay higher than in US, Europe

REAL interest rates will remain higher than those in Western Europe and the US, since unlike those economies Israel's is in the midst of a disinflationary effort, Bank of Israel spokesman Ohad Bar-Efrat said yesterday.

Unlike other leading central banks, most notably the US Federal Reserve, which this week lowered its key lending rate by 25 basis points after having done so six weeks ago, the Bank of Israel raised interest rates this week by 30 basis points, to 14 percent.

Critics of Governor Jacob Frenkel's tight monetary policy, most notably the Treasury and the Manufacturers' Association, attacked the central bank for maintaining a 6% gap between its key lending rate and the annual rate of inflation, which in 1995 stood at 8.1%.

Apartment sales fall 6.2%

APARTMENT sales fell 6.2 percent in January compared to December, according to sales figures provided by the nine largest construction companies.

The companies stressed that December 1995 was a record month in terms of sales. A spokesman for the Association of Contractors and Builders said housing prices have so far remained stable despite the drop in January sales.

Payton Planar, Taiwanese company form joint venture

PAYTON Planar Magnetics and the Taiwanese firm SimCom yesterday agreed to establish Payton-Asia, a 50-50 joint venture to manufacture planar magnetic transformers in Taiwan.

Annual turnover is expected to reach \$100 million within three years. The initial investment will be \$1.5 million. The second stage of investment will be in 12 or 15 months.

Payton Planar, Taiwanese company form joint venture

South Korea, and Taiwan. In the future, the company also plans to reach markets in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Senior manager Kobi Rosenwasser, who conducted the negotiations, said that Payton expects market penetration in Asia to have a dramatic effect on its business elsewhere in the world.

OPTIMA UNIVERSAL LIMITED advertisement with financial advice and performance statistics.

ON WEDNESDAY - MONEY DAY IN THE JERUSALEM POST advertisement.

American Online denies merger talks with Netscape advertisement.

IAI unit receives ISO certification advertisement.

OPTIMA UNIVERSAL LIMITED advertisement (continued).

Opting for a bull's eye, every time? advertisement for TACHLIT.

Astaire and Partners Ltd. advertisement for international money managers.

Although the AOL spokeswoman denied the merger talks, she would not comment on whether America Online and Netscape have held talks about a potential alliance.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS table with exchange rates for various currencies and banknotes.

ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION advertisement for a tender in the Haifa Region.

You have life, health and property insurance. Shouldn't you also have portfolio insurance? advertisement for CommStock Trading Ltd.

INVESTOR WANTED advertisement for an entertainment-cultural project.

Real Estate & Investments in Israel 1996 advertisement for The Jerusalem Post.

Key Representative Rates table showing US dollar, Sterling, and Mark exchange rates against NIS.

INFLATION RATES table showing various inflation metrics.

New York market indexes table listing DJ Industrials, DJ Transport, etc.

Other stock market indexes table including FTSE 100, Nikkei, etc.

Israeli stocks in NY table listing NYSE AMEX and other indices.

Large table of Israeli stocks in NY with columns for Name, Price, and Change.

INFLATION MONITOR table showing various inflation rates.

Dollar crossrates (US) table showing exchange rates for various currencies.

Labor rates table showing various labor market indicators.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd. table.

US commodities table listing various commodity prices.

London commodities table listing various commodity prices.

Spot market metals (US) table listing metal prices.

New York metal futures table listing various metal futures.

London metal fixes table listing various metal prices.

US commodities table (repeated).

Spot market metals (US) table (repeated).

New York metal futures table (repeated).

London metal fixes table (repeated).

US commodities table (repeated).

Spot market metals (US) table (repeated).

New York metal futures table (repeated).

London metal fixes table (repeated).

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading and Two-sided trading sections.

Main table of Tel Aviv stocks with columns for Name, Price, and Change.

PARALLEL LIST Trade & Services

Table of Parallel List Trade & Services.

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Large table of International Stock Prices with columns for Name, Price, and Change.

Market steady despite rate hike

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

By FELICE MARANZ



LOCAL stocks finished the week little changed on a mixture of news, with the Bank of Israel raising interest rates while Wall Street stocks surged after a rate cut in the US.

FTSE falls slightly

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - UK shares marked time in an uneventful day's business which saw trading restricted to a narrow range after Wednesday's record finish.

Dow passes 5,400 mark

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Dow Jones Industrial average yesterday surged above 5,400 for the first time to close at a record high for the fifth consecutive session.

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Table of Currency Cross-Rates showing MARK, STERLING, SF, and FF rates.

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Ex-defense attache, wife charged with fraud, theft

BRIG.-Gen. Yehuda Peled, a former Defense Ministry attache in Singapore, and his wife, Avital, who worked as the book-keeper in the delegation's office, have been indicted on five counts of fraud and theft by the Tel Aviv District Court, which removed a publication ban on the indictment yesterday.

The couple is accused of defrauding the Defense Ministry of hundreds of thousands of shekels from July 1989 to August 1993.

The two allegedly reported inflated prices for some 30 airline tickets that actually cost several hundred dollars less each. The higher sum was paid to a travel agent that kept the difference in a private account for the

Peleds to use.

The Peleds are also alleged to have written checks on and made cash withdrawals from the delegation's account, by claiming they had made home visits or made other approved trips that they never actually made.

Avital Peled and her family also allegedly accompanied her husband on business trips, with the family's expenses being illegally charged to the ministry. The couple is also accused of claiming and receiving payment for unused vacation days far in excess of the number of days they were entitled to.

The contents of a fifth count were not released for publication. (Itim)



Avi Kostelitz (right), a senior General Security Service division chief who retired earlier this week, is greeted by National Religious Party secretary-general Zevulun Orlev. Kostelitz joined the NRP yesterday and will shortly take up a key organizational role in its election campaign. (Elihu Kishchok)

Golan leader wants urgent meeting with Peres

DAVID RUDGE

THE Labor Party is making a grave mistake if it thinks "running amok" after Syria will help it in the next Knesset elections, Golan Heights Regional Council chairman Yehuda Wolman said yesterday.

Wolman, a veteran member of Labor, called for an urgent meeting with Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who has promised to stay in contact with Golan leaders and update them on developments in the peace talks.

The regional council and the Katrin Local Authority are jointly organizing a massive Tu B'Shvat planting ceremony on the Golan on Monday. Hundreds of residents have volunteered to act as guides and explain their campaign of opposition against withdrawal.

Tens of thousands of people are expected to take part in planting trees along an eight-km stretch of road between the Shirion and Wassat junctions.

"We hope that by planting a tree, those who participate will, in the true sense of the word, put down roots in the Golan and thereby have a stake in maintaining Israeli sovereignty over the region," said Marla Van Meter, a campaign leader.

The JNF is supplying the saplings, but officials stressed that it is not involved in the event in any other way.

The officials said the JNF's name and logo had appeared by mistake on some leaflets and announcements that had appeared in some newspapers advertising the event. This has since been rectified, and the JNF's logo removed, they said.

Syrian flag, slogans found in Druse villages

DAVID RUDGE

PRO-Syrian slogans and a Syrian flag have been found by police in Druse villages on the Golan Heights in the past few days.

The flag was raised above the high school in Majdal Shams and was discovered Wednesday morning by police, who removed it. Slogans declaring "The Golan Belongs to Syria" have been found sprayed on walls of houses and public buildings.

The public expression of pro-Syrian sentiments appears to be connected to the forthcoming February 14 anniversary of the 1982 general strike by Druse residents against the extension of Israeli law to the Golan Heights.

Druse, who also refused to accept Israeli identity cards, usually mark the anniversary with a one-day general strike and demonstrations, some of which have turned violent.

Spy for Iranians expelled to Jordan

ON LEVY

MOHAMMED Rajib Salameh Mohammed, the Palestinian arrested on suspicion he spied for Iran, was expelled yesterday to Jordan.

Security sources said Mohammed, 44, had caused no damage to national security, and is too minor a figure for there to be any reason to continue holding him.

He arrived here from Amman three months ago, and was living with relatives in Beit Jalla, near Bethlehem.

Mohammed was supposedly recruited by Iranian intelligence a year ago, and was controlled by someone at the Iranian Embassy in Amman.

He was sent here to photograph security sites and government ministries, and to indicate their locations on maps.

Mohammed was arrested on November 7 and confessed.

He said he had managed to convey several maps to his controller, but had been arrested before he could transfer photographs.

IDF to Ethiopians: We'll do better

ON LEVY and Itim

"THERE are differences in language and understanding, and there are things we have to learn from each other so we can do things better," Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak told a group of Ethiopian immigrants yesterday. "But I have no doubt that we are doing things right, even though we will do them better in the future."

Among the Ethiopians who met with Shahak and OC Manpower Branch Maj.-Gen. Gideon Sheffer at IDF headquarters in Tel Aviv was Addisu Messala, head of the Unified Organizations of Ethiopian Immigrants.

After the meeting, Messala said he had

suggested that an Ethiopian regular army or reserve officer be appointed to oversee the treatment members of the community receive in the IDF.

It was also suggested that a section on Ethiopian immigration and the Ethiopian community here be added to the IDF's officer training course.

"We think this can help prevent young officers from acting in an unfitting manner toward Ethiopian soldiers under their command," Messala said.

He said the atmosphere at the meeting was good, even though Shahak gave no concrete responses to the immigrants' suggestions. He added that the dialogue with the IDF would continue.

Meanwhile, the IDF announced that 1,500 former Ethiopians entered the army last year, compared to 600 in 1994. The number of female Ethiopian soldiers now stands at 140, compared to 20 in 1993.

There are 72 Ethiopian officers and NCOs in the regular army - 53 NCOs, 14 male officers, and 5 female officers. The number of Ethiopian officers has quadrupled since 1992.

No, it's not pneumonia; it's a seed

JUDY SIEGEL

A NINE-YEAR-OLD boy from Abu Ghosh who was treated with antibiotics in a number of hospitals over many months for recurrent "pneumonia" has finally been cured: Shaare Zedek Hospital doctors discovered the inflammation in his lung was due to aspiration of a small sunflower seed shell.

Dr. Eli Pizar, a pediatric pulmonologist at the hospital, succeeded in removing the fragment using bronchoscopy, in which a catheter with optic fibers to see inside the organ is inserted without general anesthesia into the lung. He removed the shell, which was hidden inside a piece of tissue that seemed to be a growth in his right lung.

In an earlier bronchoscopy for a lung biopsy, inflamed tissue was removed; upon examination, Pizar suspected that it was due to a foreign object in the lungs.

The boy had complained of coughing and respiratory problems for a long period.

Blood controversy to highlight conference

JUDY SIEGEL

THE controversy raised by heart surgeon Prof. Danny Gur over his claim that he would avoid operating on Ethiopian immigrants because of the "risk of being infected with HIV" will bring special attention to an international conference on communicable diseases as occupational hazards, being held in Jerusalem February 18-21.

According to Prof. Joseph Ribak, of Tel Aviv University's Sackler School of Medicine and head of Kupat Holim Clalit's occupational medicine center, Gur

only include doctors, nurses and dentists, but also sewage workers, prison staffers, farmers, garbage collectors, mohelms, burial-society workers, geriatric caregivers, lab workers, veterinarians and zookeepers.

A large delegation of municipal workers from New York City will attend.

Among the diseases to be discussed are AIDS; infectious hepatitis, some of whose strains cannot be fended off with vaccines; and tuberculosis, which is increasingly resistant to antibiotics.

Health fund warned on illegal billing

JUDY SIEGEL

THE Health Ministry said yesterday that it would send a warning to Kupat Holim Meuhedet for billing members "illegally" for magnetic identification cards.

Members without standing orders for supplementary health insurance have just received a bill for NIS 10 per member. It was not clear whether the fee had already been deducted from the bank accounts of those with standing orders.

A few months ago, after being queried by *The Jerusalem Post*,

the ministry's legal adviser sent a letter to Meuhedet director-general Uzi Salant saying the charge was illegal under the national health insurance law, since the fee had not been in effect before the January 1, 1994, cutoff date for all new charges.

Salant sent a letter back saying the health fund regarded the fee as legal.

Meuhedet is the last health fund to issue magnetic cards, and the first to demand that members

pay for them. An official from another health fund said the actual cost of issuing cards was "no more than one or two shekels."

In addition, since Meuhedet will no longer need to mail quarterly stickers to hundreds of thousands of members, it is saving a large amount merely by introducing the cards.

No comment was available from Salant or other Meuhedet officials on the billing, or what would happen to members who declined to pay the fee.

Two Arab envoys call for change in Jerusalem status

STEVE RODAN

TWO Arab envoys based in Israel have called for a change in the status of Jerusalem as a prerequisite to the end of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"I don't think the present status quo in Jerusalem will continue if there is to be peace in the area," said Marwan Muasher, Jordan's ambassador to Israel.

"Any outcome on Jerusalem should take into consideration not only the needs and aspirations of Jews, but of all other religions, Islam and Christianity."

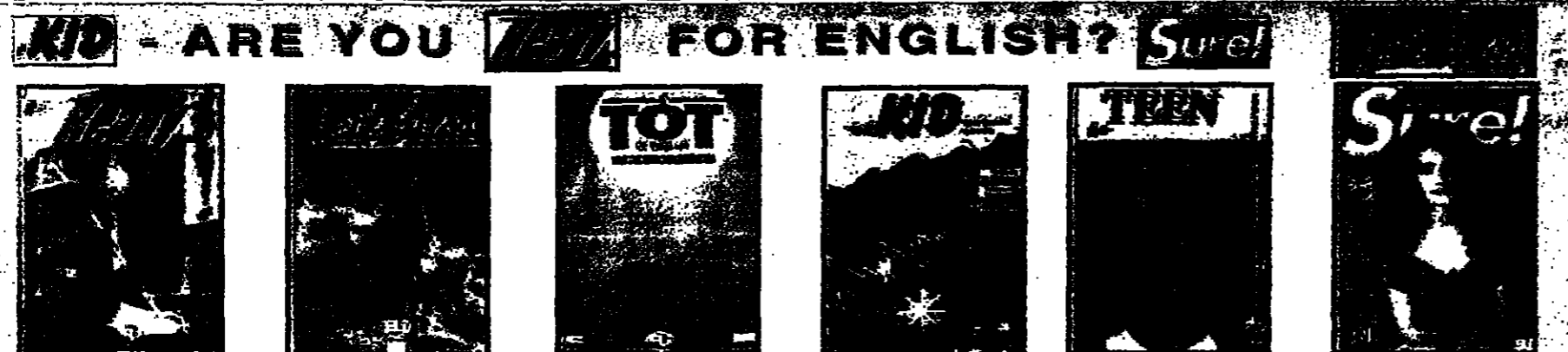
Speaking in Jerusalem to an international conference of Jewish journalists, Muasher said he

does not support redividing the city, and expressed confidence that a solution for Jerusalem can be found.

He said the political status of Jerusalem is an issue only between Israel and the Palestinians, but that the Arab world and Christian churches have an interest in ensuring access to their holy places in the city.

Talal Rhoufrani, head of the liaison office of Morocco in Tel Aviv, agreed. But he added, "Morocco supports the claim of the Palestinians [on Jerusalem] and ascribes a great deal of importance to free access and pilgrimage."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Spouses of Meshulam prisoners meet Bibi
The wives of Uzi Meshulam and his jailed supporters met yesterday with Prisons Service Commissioner Arye Bibi and asked that various rights and privileges that were taken away from the prisoners be restored to them.

The privileges were suspended after Meshulam gave a talk, via his cellular phone, to a group of supporters outside the prison. The wives complained that their husbands are being housed under difficult conditions, "with rats and filth."

Bibi said that prisoners on hunger strike do not get any privileges. For three days, the group has refused to eat solid food, drinking only water, milk and soup. *Itim*

Japanese soldiers to join Observer Force
The first unit of a small detachment of Japanese soldiers is due to arrive on the Golan Heights today to join the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

Altogether, some 30 Japanese soldiers are scheduled to join the force to replace a similar number of troops from the Canadian logistics contingent. It is reported to be only the third occasion that Japan has agreed to send its soldiers to participate in an international peacekeeping mission. The Japanese government is reported to be paying for a separate group of 16 oratories to be sent with the soldiers to construct Japanese beds and baths and cook traditional food for them. *David Rudge*

Examination clears parents of abuse charge
The Petah Tikva couple arrested earlier in the week on suspicion of abusing their two-month-old twins were released from house arrest yesterday. Medical examination of the girls showed that their injuries were caused during the birth process. The girls remain in Schneider Children's Medical Center. *Itim*

Couple remanded in Tel Aviv murder
A Rishon LeZion couple had their remand extended yesterday by Tel Aviv Magistrates Court on suspicion they stabbed Shlomo Sasson, 33, on Saturday, following an argument in a Tel Aviv discotheque.

Police representatives told the court that although Michael Nasri, 27, had actually stabbed Sasson, there was evidence that his 28-year-old wife, Rahel, was actively involved in the murder. Michael Nasri was remanded for 11 days, and Rahel Nasri for eight days. *Itim*

Griffey becomes baseball's costliest player

SEATTLE (Reuters) - Six-time All-Star outfielder Ken Griffey Jr signed a four-year, \$34 million contract extension with the Seattle Mariners Wednesday making him the highest paid player in baseball.

"I've always felt it's not a matter of the money," Griffey said. "I just wanted to be on a winner and want to be there in October." The deal brought a sense of relief to both sides.



LEGGO - Portland's Chris Dudley tries to keep the ball away from Utah's Felton Spencer (Reuters)

Jazz withstands wild rally

PORTLAND (AP) - John Stockton sank five of six free throws in the final 1:17 as Utah withstood a wild Portland rally and won 98-94.

WESTERN CONFERENCE Midwest Division and Pacific Division tables with columns for W, L, Pct., GB.

Utah led 86-63 early in the fourth quarter before Cliff Robinson and James Robinson, who got in a scuffle after Tuesday's practice, led an improbable comeback.

Charitable Maccabi gives visiting Bologna a gift win

BRIAN FREEMAN

IF Yad Eliahu was hosting a charity event, the blue-and-yellow would feel right at home. Maccabi Tel Aviv turned the ball over repeatedly in the second half and missed three crucial free throws down the stretch, blowing a 13-point lead to lose 86-83 to visiting Buckler Bologna last night in a must-win matchup in the European Club Championships final pool.

After Croatian superstar Arjan Komazec drilled a three-pointer on the next play, Brad Leaf was called for a questionable offensive foul on Maccabi's following possession.

possession and did not stop, scoring nine points and pulling down five rebounds in the half and contributing stellar defense during a 19-2 run that resulted in a 35-22 Maccabi lead with less than six minutes remaining in the half.

UConn win-streak hits 19

PISCATAWAY, N.J. (AP) - Ray Allen and Doron Sheffer scored 25 points apiece, and No. 4 Connecticut pulled away from stubborn Rutgers in the final 10 minutes for a 77-59 victory Wednesday night.

UConn's school-record winning streak hit 19. Rutgers (5-12, 2-7 Big East) trailed 51-45 with 11:30 remaining and had three separate chances to get closer.

UConn's top 25 results: No. 3 Kansas beat Oklahoma State 84-66; No. 4 Connecticut beat Rutgers 77-59; No. 5 Cincinnati beat North Carolina Charlotte 78-64; No. 8 North Carolina State beat Duke 73-74; No. 9 Georgetown (18-3) beat West Virginia 91-67; No. 10 Penn State lost to Michigan State 61-88; No. 12 Wake Forest beat North Carolina State 66-62; No. 13 Virginia Tech beat North Carolina-Greensboro 74-68; No. 15 Texas Tech beat Oral Roberts 78-74; No. 17 Florida State beat Miami 80-69; No. 22 Auburn lost to Vanderbilt 76-62; No. 23 Eastern Michigan (15-2) lost to Ohio State 82-73.

Ran, Behr, Erlich prepare for Davis Cup

EYAL Ran, Noam Behr and Eyal Erlich warmed up this week for next weekend's Davis Cup tie against Norway at Ramat Hasharon.

Captain Shlomo Glickstein watched Israel's top player Ran (170 in the world) as he suffered a first-round loss to South African Marcos Ondruska (105) 6-3, 6-3 in Shanghai.

Sportoto punters ready for weekend fixtures

LOCAL fans will be hard pressed to find a game to match last week's thrilling encounter between Hapoel Haifa and Betar Jerusalem, when observing this week's list of National League fixtures.

A low-key weekend looks to be in-store, although the majority of punters will be listening eagerly to the radio for results in the hope that they are the lucky winners of the weekend's bumper NIS 13 million Sportoto payout.

English FA bans player for one year for failing drug test

LONDON (Reuters) - The English Football Association handed out its stiffest punishment to a player for more than 30 years when it banned Roger Stanislaus of Leyton Orient for 12 months yesterday for failing a drug test.

Report: Seahawks headed to California

The owner of the Seattle Seahawks plans to move the team to southern California, local media reports said yesterday.

Local golf

HAROLD Stutzen and Soll Friedman took first place in the better ball medal tournament at the Caesars Golf Club over the weekend, with 64 net strokes followed by two teams tied for second place at 69, Clive Josset and Akiva Dankner, and Albert Elias and Mike Manor.

Israel Softball Association advertisement. Text: 'is looking for new teams and players for the '96 season. Please register before February 7. Looking to be an umpire? Israel Softball Association will be holding umpire clinics for new and advanced umpires. For further information, call 08-927 0690. The Israel Softball Association is sponsored by THE JERUSALEM POST.'

Sports Briefs advertisement. Text: 'Report: Seahawks headed to California... Super Bowl most watched show ever... Local golf... The Israel Center and The Jerusalem Post present Joe Hoffman Sports Editor of The Jerusalem Post "The Golden Age of Jewish Baseball" (To be preceded by a chapter of Ken Burns Baseball) Saturday, February 10, 1996 at 8:30 p.m. at the Israel Center, 10 Rehov Straus, Jerusalem. Admission: NIS 7 (NIS 5 with a baseball cap). For more information, call 02-394206.'

Civilian leader wants urgent meeting with Peres... The deal brought a sense of relief to both sides... Griffey also won his sixth consecutive Gold Glove Award for fielding excellence last season.

GUESS WHICH? Which NFL team drafted current Miami Heat coach Pat Riley? Pittsburgh Steelers, Dallas Cowboys, Chicago Bears, Indianapolis Colts. Answer Sunday. Answer to yesterday's 'Guess Which': The Kentucky Colonels played in the ABA from 1967-1976.

SCOREBOARD NHL - Wednesday's results: Buffalo 5, Florida 1; Boston 3, Ottawa 1; Montreal 5, Washington 3; Tampa Bay 4, Pittsburgh 1; St. Louis 4, Toronto 0; N.Y. Rangers 1, Dallas 1; Chicago 4, Edmonton 0; Hartford 6, Los Angeles 4; Anaheim 2, Colorado 1.

Yigal Amir agrees to undergo psychiatric evaluation

RAINE MARCUS

YIGAL Amir, the confessed assassin of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, agreed yesterday to undergo a psychiatric examination.

This latest move was apparently suggested by presiding Judge Edmond Levy, to avoid any future legal repercussions.

Amir has repeatedly stated that he is perfectly sane and was not suffering from any disturbance when he killed the premier in November.

Two additional defense lawyers were appointed by the Tel Aviv District Court yesterday; Samuel Fleishman and Gabi Shabar. The two will join Jonathan Ray Goldberg in representing Amir.

But Fleishman's employer, Haim Migav, said after hearing the news that he would fire Fleishman for accepting the case without discussing it with him first.

Fleishman responded that Amir was entitled to a fair trial and defense.

Fleishman also asked that the district psychiatrist evaluate whether Amir was sane at the time of the murder and if he had planned his deed in advance.

But prosecutor Penina Guy objected to the evaluation. "Until now the court has not heard any claims that Amir was insane at the time of his actions," she said. Up until the killing, she added, he had lived a normal life.

Levy responded that this was "all the more reason to send him for observation."

Meanwhile, another lawyer who was approached by the court and the Amir family to represent Amir said he was still considering whether to take on the case.

"It is clear that the defense cannot take the ideological line that the defendant would wish to adopt, and so I have not yet made my decision," Yitzhak Brand said.

So far two lawyers have resigned from the case, after complaining they had been instructed to take a political line of defense.

Amir did not flinch when the court screened the video of the assassination, which was shot by amateur photographer Ron Kempler. At times when Amir saw himself on the screen he smiled faintly, but showed no emotion. When he saw himself firing the shots that killed Rabin, he sat motionless.

Kempler, who testified for the prosecution yesterday, said he focused on Amir because he "seemed suspicious."

Under cross-examination by Goldberg, Kempler said he had a "strange feeling that something was going to happen," and that Amir appeared "weird."

The trial will continue in two weeks to give the defense additional time to prepare its case.

Lie detector suggested to resolve police-GSS conflict

BILL HUTMAN

THE Shamgar Commission hearings took an unexpected turn yesterday when the possibility of using a lie detector to help determine who was responsible for the security foul-ups the night of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination was raised.

Sources said Attorney Amnon Zichroni told the commission that his client, Yarkon District police commander Ya'acov Shoval, never received an order from anyone in the General Security Service to clear the public out of the area where Rabin was later killed.

Two of the GSS officers being investigated by the commission - the VIP protection unit head and the commander at the scene - maintain such an order was given, the sources said.

However, they admit that while other instructions that night concerning security coordination between the GSS and police were written out and can be verified, the order to clear the area was given "by word of mouth."

Under cross-examination by the

attorneys for the two GSS officers, Shoval repeatedly maintained he had received no such order, which implies a severe failure on the part of the GSS.

The commission did not immediately take a stand on Zichroni's offer that his client and the two GSS officers take lie-detector tests to determine who is telling the truth, according to the sources.

From the outset of the commission's hearings police and the GSS have been strongly at odds over who was responsible for the security failures. Yesterday marked the first time the idea of using a lie detector to help resolve the dispute was raised.

During the hearing, Zichroni and Shoval used slides to illustrate the security measures taken by police, in coordination with the GSS, at the November 4 rally. They emphasized that the overall responsibility for planning and maintaining the personal security of the prime minister is with the GSS, and that, in this regard, the police work according to GSS instructions.



Artist Micha Lurie puts the finishing touches on some of the 30 chocolate soldiers being prepared for an exhibition at the Israel Museum, entitled 'The Image of the Macho Israeli,' which opens next week. (Roster)

MK Yehzekel indicted in Histadrut corruption scandal

RAINE MARCUS

LABOR MK Avi Yehzekel was indicted yesterday in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court on charges of breach of trust, falsifying documents, fraud, and attempted fraud, in connection with what has come to be known as the Histadrut scandal.

Yehzekel's parliamentary immunity was lifted Wednesday by the Knesset House Committee. Yehzekel had agreed to have his immunity lifted so he could clear his name in court.

According to the indictment, during the period when Yehzekel was the administrative and personnel chairman of the Histadrut and chairman of the Histadrut-affiliated Re'ut Foundation, up until June 1992, he fraudulently tried to obtain

funds for his own primary campaign.

He is accused of instructing former Mifalei Tarbut Vehinuch director, Uzi Pessah, to bill the Histadrut and Re'ut for his campaign expenses by issuing false invoices. Pessah turned state's witness in the case.

Mifalei Tarbut Vehinuch is a Histadrut-owned company that carries out printing work and produces events. Most of the company's work is commissioned by Histadrut divisions and the Labor Party, though it also does work for the general public.

Pessah was the director of the company's events and produc-

tion division and was responsible for taking orders, assigning the work, making payments for services, and collecting from those ordering services.

According to the indictment, Yehzekel hired Mifalei Tarbut Vehinuch to organize four annual award events at the beginning of 1992.

In March of that year, Yehzekel then commissioned private work, connected to his primary campaign that spring. The work included preparing posters, typing letters in Romanian, and organizing a victory party at the Rishon LeZion Country Club. The bill for the private work came to NIS 16,693.

Yehzekel should have paid the bill himself, but instead, allegedly asked Pessah to bill Re'ut and the Histadrut, by issuing invoices ostensibly pertaining to expenses incurred by the award ceremonies.

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Rafael workers fume over planned dismissals

DAVID RUDGE

TEMPERS flared at Rafael yesterday after scores of workers at the weapons development authority received official notification of management's intention to dismiss them.

At a heated emergency meeting of workers' representatives, several called for an immediate demonstration, but it was decided to defer any action until after the weekend.

"The mood is one of deep-rooted anger and bitterness, but we are going to stay calm and not play into the hands of management," said David Zuckman, head of the workers' action campaign.

He said it had been decided to take "some form of action on Sunday that will make management and the government realize that Rafael workers mean bus-

ness and can't be ignored," but he would not elaborate.

Zuckman said the letters sent yesterday to more than 70 state employees at the plant, south of Acre, were the first official notification that they were slated to be dismissed. The workers in question have until February 11 to lodge written appeals.

Management intends to cut the workforce of 4,300 by over 600 people by the end of this year. This includes 350 government employees, with the remainder workers on special contracts. Over 100 state workers have already agreed to leave of their own accord.

The cutbacks are all part of a government plan to turn Rafael, which lost over NIS 300 million

last year, into a public company.

The Histadrut is fighting the proposals and reached an agreement in principle with Treasury officials last week to defer the plans for at least two years. In return, the workers agreed to accept the dismissal of 400 government employees and a pay freeze over the two-year period.

The agreement, however, is dependent on the approval of Prime Minister and Defense Minister Shimon Peres. An answer was expected at the beginning of the week, but his decision has since been deferred to Sunday.

"Instead of getting an answer, the matter has now been reverted back to square one," said Yigal Cohen, head of the trade union department of the Histadrut's Haifa branch.

WEATHER

Golden 6-10

Haifa 9-16

Tiberias 10-18

Afula 8-17

Samartha 9-17

Tel Aviv 10-18

Jerusalem 7-11

Beer Sheva 8-17

Dead Sea 13-21

Eilat 12-21

Forecast: Drop in temperatures. Local rain showers. Shabbat: Partly cloudy, cold.

AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	HIGH			
	C	F	C		
American	00	32	04	40	clear
Berlin	07	19	00	32	clear
London	01	33	27	81	cloudy
Moscow	12	10	-05	23	clear
New York	06	23	03	37	cloudy
Paris	06	23	03	37	clear
Rome	06	23	03	37	clear
Tel Aviv	11	12	08	16	clear

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Tu Bishvat 1996 • 5756



Major Ceremonies

Thursday, 11 Shvat, 1.2.96 Be'er Ezer - 11:00 a.m., in honor of the 50th anniversary of the 11 settlement outposts in the Negev, with the participation of regional residents, soldiers, pupils, new immigrants and original settler families. Event includes planting Founders Grove under the patronage of Minister of Agriculture, Yaacov Tzur and JNF Board Member, Uri Pinkerfeld.

Monday, Tu Bishvat, 5.2.96

CENTRAL REGION - Participation in events in this region, by invitation only:

Nevah Ilan - 11:00 a.m., under the patronage of the President of Israel, Ezer Weizmann, Minister of the Environment, Yossi Seid, W.Z.O. and Jewish Agency Chairman, Abraham Burg, JNF World Chairman, Moshe Rivlin and Matsh Yehuda Regional Council Head, Meir Weisel.

Knesset Building - 12:15 p.m., opening of exhibition. For there is Hope of a Tree; selected photographs by members of the Israel Photographic Art Society of the Shaar HaGai burnt forests. With the participation of Knesset Speaker, Prof. Shoshana Weisz, MK Naomi Hazan, JNF Board Member, Yitzhak Rogov and IPAS representative, Moshe Yasooi.

Knesset Forest, Mt. Scopus - 2:00 p.m., Knesset ceremony with the participation of Knesset Speaker, Prof. Shoshana Weisz, Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, JNF World Chairman, Moshe Rivlin, MKs and Knesset staff.

NORTHERN REGION:

Segev Forests - 11:30 p.m., ceremony with the participation of area residents, pupils and soldiers. Under the patronage of Deputy Minister of education, culture and sport, MK Micha Goldmann. Event includes a hiking happening in the area.

SOUTHERN REGION:

Eilat - 10:00 a.m., inauguration of Eilat Forest with the participation of city residents, tourists and pupils. Under the patronage of JNF Co-Chairman, Yoram Peled and the mayor of Eilat, Gabi Kadosh.

Yatir Forest - 11:00 a.m., with the participation of area residents, soldiers, new immigrants and pupils. Under the patronage of Mt. Hebron Regional Council Head, Ron Shachner and JNF Board Member, Memehem Leibovitch.

Beit Kama - 2:00 p.m., Good Neighbors, joint plantings by Jewish and Bedouin pupils, local sheiks, soldiers and new immigrants. Under the patronage of Deputy Chairman Board of Directors, Chaim Cohen, Beit Shimon Regional Council Head, Shmuel Kadmon and the mayor of Rahat, Talal Alkrenawi.

Thursday, 18 Shvat, 8.2.96 Haruvit Forest near Kfar Menashe - 11:00 a.m., central ceremony for new immigrants in the country, under the patronage of Minister of Absorption Ya'ir Tzaban, JNF World Chairman, Moshe Rivlin, Yoav Regional Council Head, Rony Tzabim and Director, Central Office of Information, Dotan Shohat.

Dimona - 11:00 a.m., Planting ceremony with the participation of pupils, area residents, soldiers and new immigrants. Under the patronage of JNF Co-Chairman, Yoram Peled and the mayor of Dimona, Gaby Lalouah.

Tuesday, 23 Shvat, 13.2.96 - 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., day devoted to forestry topics at the Agricultural Research Administration, Vulkan Center, Beit Dagan.

Stop, Plant & Drive

From 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., drivers on the country's roads on Tu Bishvat will be able to plant trees at one of three designated sites:

Northern Region: HaShoumim Junction, Tirou-Nahalal Highway.

Central Region: HaPortzma Monument, Jerusalem-Tel Aviv Highway (opposite Meashev Sho'eva).

Southern Region: Lehavim Junction, Beit Kama-Beer Sheva Highway.

More than a quarter of a million people, including pupils, residents, soldiers, youth, tourists and students will take part in the plantings and ceremonies to be held throughout the country.

This season, JNF will plant some three million seedlings on some 30,000 dunams of land all over the country, including some 10,000 dunams in the south as part of its efforts to halt desertification.

Green Week Happening

Thursday-Monday, 11-15 Shvat, 1-5.2.96 Jerusalem: Albia Yehud Shopping Mall - 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; children's activities, events, stands, etc.

Sunday-Thursday, 14-18 Shvat, 4-8.2.96 Jerusalem: Malha Shopping Mall - 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., children's activities, events, stands, etc.

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